

# **2002 Profile of the Solicitors of New South Wales**

# Table of Contents

<b>INDEX OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>SNAPSHOT OF SOLICITORS IN 2002</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
THE ROLE OF THE LAW SOCIETY .....	5
OBJECTIVES .....	5
METHODOLOGY .....	5
FURTHER INFORMATION .....	6
<b>GENDER AND GROWTH</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>AGE</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>YEARS SINCE ADMISSION</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>LANGUAGES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>LOCATION</b> .....	<b>13</b>
LOCATION OF FIRMS .....	13
<b>EMPLOYMENT SECTOR</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION</b> .....	<b>18</b>
WOMEN .....	18
INDIGENOUS SOLICITORS.....	19
<b>PRIVATE PRACTICE</b> .....	<b>20</b>
GENDER PROFILE OF PRACTITIONERS IN LAW FIRMS .....	22
AGE PROFILE OF PRACTITIONERS IN LAW FIRMS.....	25
YEARS SINCE ADMISSION PROFILE .....	25
<b>GOVERNMENT SOLICITORS</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>CORPORATE SOLICITORS</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>AREAS OF PRACTICE</b> .....	<b>30</b>
EMPLOYMENT SECTOR .....	32
SIZE OF FIRM .....	32
<b>INCOME</b> .....	<b>34</b>
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT .....	35
PRIVATE PRACTICE.....	37
GENDER.....	38
AREAS OF PRACTICE.....	41
REMUNERATION AND WORK CONDITIONS SURVEY.....	42
<b>INTERNET AND EMAIL</b> .....	<b>43</b>

## Index of Figures

Figure 1: The Profession 1988 - 2002.....	8
Figure 2: Age Profile of All Solicitors 2002.....	9
Figure 3: Country of Birth 2002.....	11
Figure 4: Languages (other than English) 2002.....	12
Figure 5: Geographical Profile.....	13
Figure 6: Employment Sector 1988 - 2002.....	17
Figure 7: Change in Firm Profile.....	21
Figure 8: 2002 Firm Profile.....	22
Figure 9: Ratio of Employees to Principals.....	22
Figure 10: Gender Profile of firms.....	24
Figure 11: Age Profile of Practitioners in Law Firms.....	25
Figure 12: Age Profile of Government Solicitors.....	27
Figure 13: Age profile of Corporate Solicitors.....	29
Figure 14: Areas of Practice by Size of Firm.....	33
Figure 15: Income for financial year end 2002.....	34
Figure 16: Income by Sector.....	36
Figure 17: Income by Size of Firm.....	37
Figure 18: Income by Gender.....	38
Figure 19: Income (Gender and Years since Admission).....	39
Figure 20: Income 1996/97 to 2002/2003.....	40
Figure 21: Internet Access 1996/97 to 2002/2003.....	43

## Index of Tables

Table 1: Gender & Growth 1988 - 2002.....	7
Table 2: Age Profile of All Solicitors 2002.....	9
Table 3: Years since Admission 2002.....	10
Table 4: Country of Birth 2000 - 2002.....	11
Table 5: Location of Firms 1997 - 2002.....	14
Table 6: Location of Solicitors 1988 to 2002.....	15
Table 7: Gender profile of each sector in 2002.....	16
Table 8: Profile of Female Solicitors.....	18
Table 9: Profile of Private Practice.....	20
Table 10: Firm Profile 2002.....	21
Table 11: Gender profile of firms.....	24
Table 12: Years since admission profile of solicitors in firms (%).....	25
Table 13: Profile of Government Solicitors.....	26
Table 14: Years since admission profile.....	27
Table 15: Age Profile.....	27
Table 16: Profile of Corporate Solicitors.....	28
Table 17: Years since Admission Profile.....	29
Table 18: Age Profile.....	29
Table 19: Areas of Practice 1993/1994 to 2002/2003.....	31
Table 20: Areas of Practice by Sector.....	32
Table 21: Income for 2000 the past three financial years.....	34
Table 22: Income by Sector.....	35
Table 23: Income bands for each sector.....	36
Table 24: Income by Gender.....	39
Table 25: Income and Areas of Practice.....	41
Table 26: Internet Access (by Size of Firm and Location).....	43

## Snapshot of Solicitors in 2002

### On 1 October 2002 there were:

- 17,189 solicitors holding current NSW practising certificates
- 6,374 female solicitors (37.1%)
- 10,815 male solicitors (62.9%)
- 12,597 lawyers working in private practice (73.3%)
- 1,708 lawyers working in government (9.9%)
- 2,169 solicitors working in corporations (12.6%)
- 9,550 solicitors were practising in the Sydney CBD (55.6%)
- 4,548 solicitors were practising in the suburbs of Sydney (26.4%)
- 2,312 solicitors were practising in rural areas of New South Wales (13.5%)
- 3,662 private law firms
- 141 government employers
- 841 corporate employers
- 33.6% of solicitors in private practice were working in firms of 21 or more partners
- 21.0% of solicitors in private practice were working in firms of 2 - 4 partners
- 33.3% of solicitors in private practice were working in sole practitioner firms
- sole practitioner size firms constituted 81.2% of all firms
- firms of 21 or more partners constituted 0.7% of firms
- 48.2% of solicitors were less than 39 years of age
- 28.6% of solicitors had been admitted for less than 3 years
- 13.4% of solicitors had been admitted for between 4 - 7 years

### In the twelve months since October 2001

- the profession had grown by 6.0%
- the number of female solicitors had increased by 9.8%
- the number of male solicitors had increased by 3.8%
- 1,558 solicitors were issued with a practising certificate for the first time, consisting of 54.6% women and 45.4% men)

## Introduction

### *The Role of the Law Society*

The Law Society of New South Wales is the professional association representing the solicitors of New South Wales. The Law Society has two primary responsibilities: it acts as the licensing and regulatory authority by maintaining professional standards of conduct and investigating complaints against its members; it also represents the interests of practising solicitors.

The role of the Society is summarised by the objectives set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, which include:

- *to consider, originate and promote reform and improvements in the law;*
- *to remedy defects in the administration of justice;*
- *to make improvements in administration of legal practice;*
- *to represent generally the views of the profession;*
- *to preserve its integrity and status;*
- *to suppress dishonourable conduct or practices; and*
- *to consider and deal with all matters affecting professional interests of members of the Society.*

The Law Society is governed by an elected Council of 21 members. The Council provides policy directions for the Law Society. It is assisted by a network of committees made up of volunteers from the profession and the public.

Further information about the Law Society can be found on the Law Society's web page at <http://www.lawsociety.com.au>.

### *Objectives*

The purpose of this report is two fold:

- (a) to collect and analyse information about the demographic profile of the practising profession; and
- (b) identify and monitor any trends in this profile by comparing this year's data with information from previous years.

### *Methodology*

The information contained in this report is drawn from two sources. The first is the annual census data which is drawn from the Law Society's membership database on 1 October (or nearest working day) each year. The data used in this report was drawn from the database on Tuesday 1 October 2002. This data relates only to those solicitors who held a current practising certificate on that day. As the membership data fluctuates throughout the year, the Law Society uses the data drawn in October to measure the profession for the reporting year as it is the most stable month. While the Law Society has retained the records of solicitors for many years, this report relies on information

collected and stored in the membership database since 1988. From this period forward, the coding of information has been reliable and consistent. In some instances only percentages are reported because the numbers are so small that they may reveal the identity of an individual solicitor.

There may be many people in NSW who are working in law related fields (some of whom hold law qualifications and may have been admitted to practise) who do not need to hold a practising certificate. Information about people working in these occupations is not collected or reported by the Law Society.

The information contained in this report does not include solicitors practising under the national practising scheme who are designated as interstate firms and individuals.

The second source of information summarised in this report is drawn from the annual practising certificate surveys that the Law Society has conducted since 1993/94. Each year, as part of the practising certificate renewal process, solicitors are invited to complete a voluntary survey. In addition to collecting a range of demographic information, the survey also gathers information about dominant areas of practice, income, access to and use of technology and other issues relevant to the professional lives of solicitors. Response rates to the survey have averaged at approximately 59%. Some of the results of these surveys are described in this report. The practising certificate survey (and the data collected from the survey) is anonymous. The Law Society does not and cannot link the information collected through the surveys to individual solicitors or the organisations for whom they work. Separate volumes of the practising certificate survey reports are available to members of the Law Society on request.

Monthly updates of these statistics are published on the Law Society web site at [www.lawsociety.com.au/about/statistics](http://www.lawsociety.com.au/about/statistics).

### *Further information*

For further information about this report and other statistical information held by the Law Society contact:

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## Gender and Growth

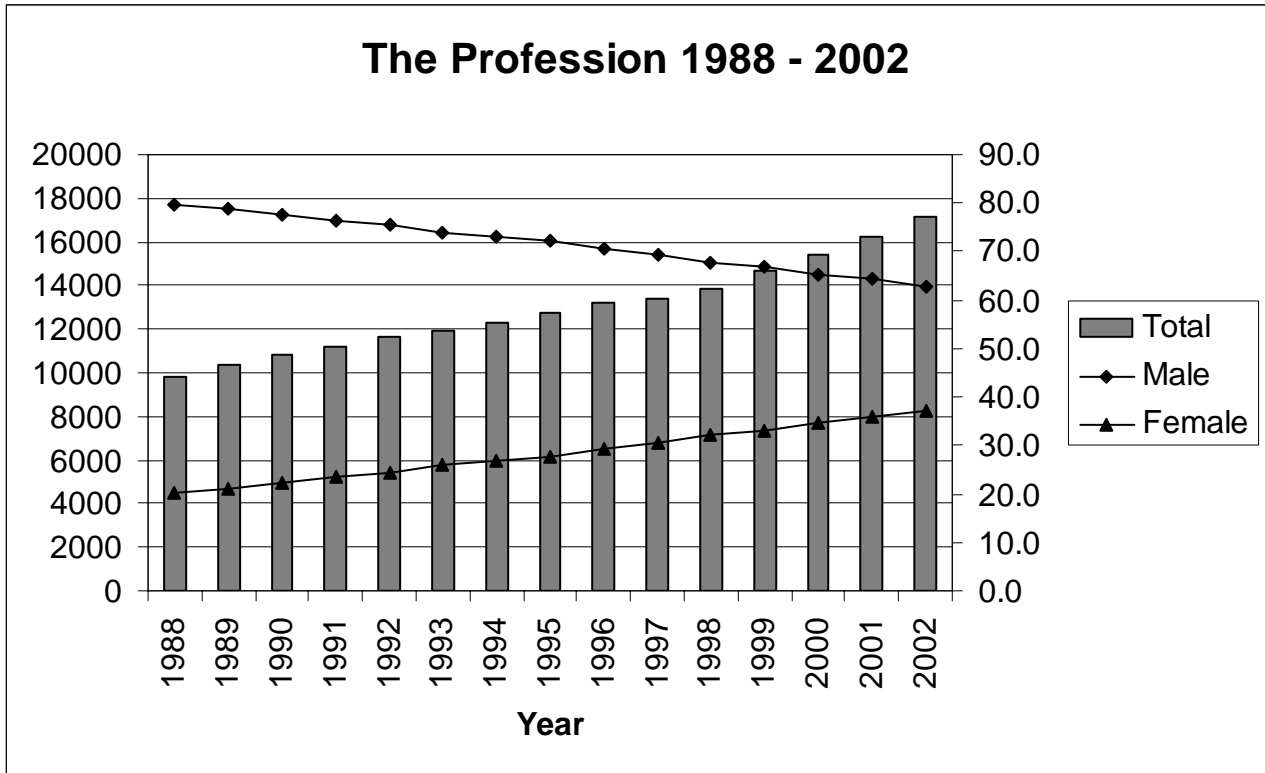
On 1 October 2002, there were 17,189 solicitors with current New South Wales practising certificates. Of these, there were 6,374 female solicitors and 10,815 male solicitors. These findings are illustrated in Table 1 below and Figure 1 overleaf.

Since 1988, the profession has grown by 75% with an annual average growth rate of 5%. Within that general pattern of growth, the number of female solicitors has grown by 222% (in contrast to the growth rate for male solicitors of 38%). While the growth rate for women is generally greater than that for male solicitor, in the twelve months since October 2001, the growth rate for male increased from 3.5% to 3.8% and the growth rate for females increased from 9.0% to 9.8%

**Table 1: Gender & Growth 1988 - 2002**

Year	Number			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1988	7,829	1,979	9,808	79.8	20.2	100.0
1989	8,197	2,196	10,393	78.9	21.1	100.0
1990	8,393	2,398	10,791	77.8	22.2	100.0
1991	8,596	2,634	11,230	76.5	23.5	100.0
1992	8,801	2,837	11,638	75.6	24.4	100.0
1993	8,859	3,098	11,957	74.1	25.9	100.0
1994	8,992	3,291	12,283	73.2	26.8	100.0
1995	9,243	3,554	12,797	72.2	27.8	100.0
1996	9,331	3,868	13,199	70.7	29.3	100.0
1997	9,310	4,099	13,409	69.4	30.6	100.0
1998	9,414	4,457	13,871	67.9	32.1	100.0
1999	9,777	4,866	14,643	66.8	33.2	100.0
2000	10,060	5,322	15,382	65.4	34.6	100.0
2001	10,417	5,803	16,220	64.2	35.8	100.0
2002	10,815	6,374	17,189	62.9	37.1	100.0

Figure 1: The Profession 1988 - 2002





## Age

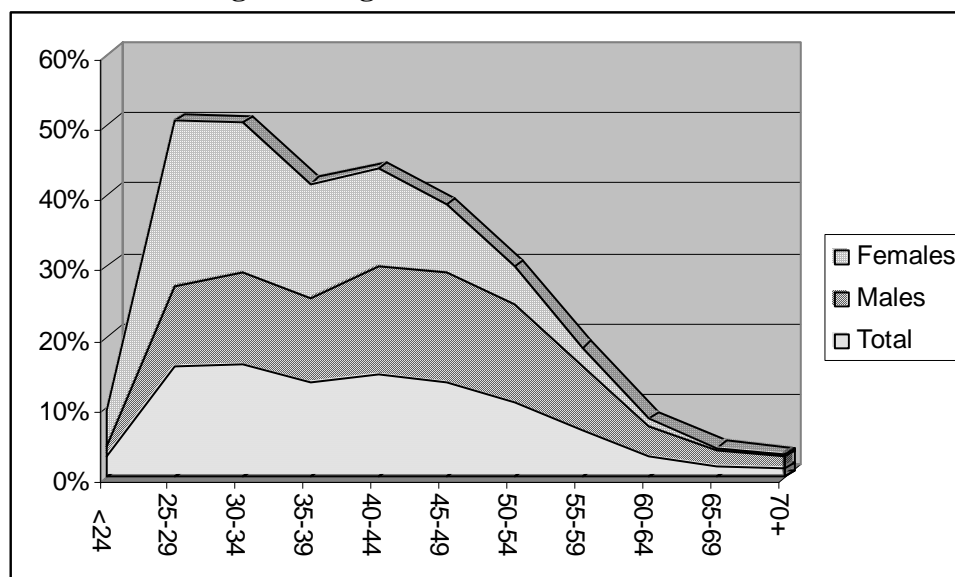
The average age of solicitors was 41 years (last year's average was 40.2 years). The average age for female solicitors was 36.3 years and male solicitors was 43.6 years.

The profession is a relatively young one with half of the profession aged less than 39 years (48.2%). Over one-quarter (28.2%) of the profession is aged between 40 and 49 years while the remainder are more than 50 years of age (23.0%). These findings are illustrated in Table 2 and Figure 2.

**Table 2: Age Profile of All Solicitors 2002**

Age Band	Number			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
29 years or less	1,373	1,833	3,206	12.7	28.8	18.7
30 – 39 years	2,700	2,392	5,092	25.0	37.5	29.6
40 – 49 years	3,351	1,490	4,841	31.0	23.4	28.2
50 – 59 years	2,483	497	2,980	23.0	7.8	17.3
60+ years	865	111	976	8.0	1.7	5.7
No answer	43	51	94	0.4	0.9	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,815</b>	<b>6,374</b>	<b>17,189</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 2: Age Profile of All Solicitors 2002**



## Years since admission

Since 1 October 2002, 1,558 solicitors were issued with a practising certificate for the first time, consisting of 54.6% women and 45.4%

Years since admission measures the number of years since the solicitor was admitted in New South Wales and the date on which the data was extracted from the membership database (1 October 2002). It does not take account of any breaks in practice when a solicitor may not have renewed a practising certificate or solicitors who may not have practised for a period, but continued to hold a practising certificate, such as during an extended overseas visit or parental leave.

In October 2002, over one-quarter of the profession had been admitted for 3 years of less (28.6%), one third between 4 and 14 years (31.3%) and two in five (40.1%) had been admitted for more than 15 years. These findings are illustrated in Table 3.

The years since admission profile reflects the age profile of the profession discussed in an earlier section of this report. Over half of all practising solicitors (58.0%) have been admitted for over 8 years. In contrast approximately one third of female solicitors had been admitted for this period (37.1%) and two thirds of male solicitors (68.2%) had been admitted for this period.

**Table 3: Years since Admission 2002**

Years since admission	Number			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>Less than 1 yr</b>	934	1,076	2,010	11.1	26.1	16.0
<b>1 – 3 years</b>	814	765	1,579	9.7	18.5	12.6
<b>4 – 7 years</b>	930	750	1,680	11.1	18.2	13.4
<b>8 – 14 years</b>	1,446	793	2,239	17.2	19.2	17.9
<b>15+ years</b>	4,291	740	5,031	51.0	17.9	40.1
<b>Total</b>	8,415	4,124	12,539	100.1	99.9	100.0

## Country of Birth

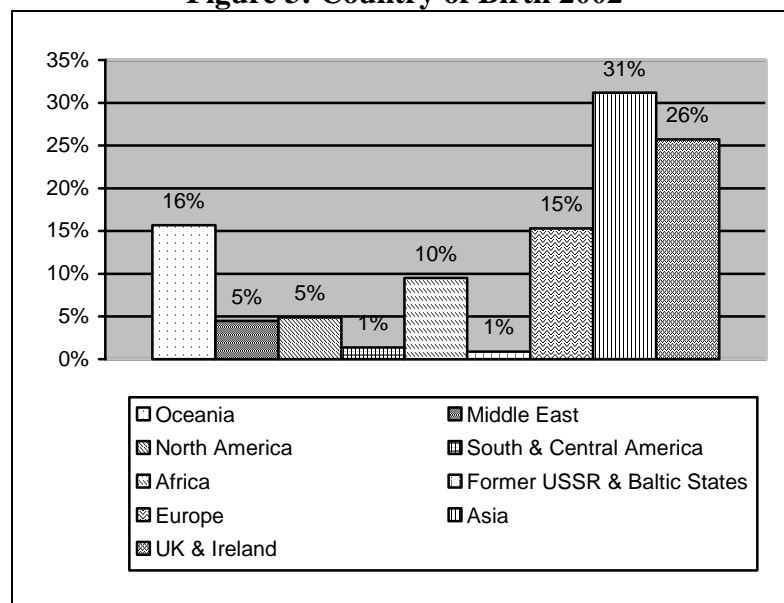
The majority of New South Wales solicitors were born in New South Wales (63.5%) and Australian born solicitors make up three quarters (77.1%) of all solicitors.

However, the proportion of solicitor born overseas continues to rise. In 2002, almost one-quarter (22.9%) of practising solicitors were born overseas, compared with 20.7% last year. Solicitors born in Asian countries constitute the single biggest increase of 4.4%<sup>1</sup>

**Table 4: Country of Birth 2000 - 2002**

Region	Overseas born Solicitors (%)		
	2000	2001	2002
Oceania	13.3	14.6	15.7
Middle East	3.8	3.9	4.5
North America	5.1	4.5	4.9
South & Central America	1.4	1.3	1.4
Africa	9.0	8.5	9.5
Former USSR & Baltic States	0.9	0.8	0.9
Europe	16.5	14.8	15.3
Asia	25.9	26.8	31.2
UK & Ireland	25.0	24.7	25.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 3: Country of Birth 2002**



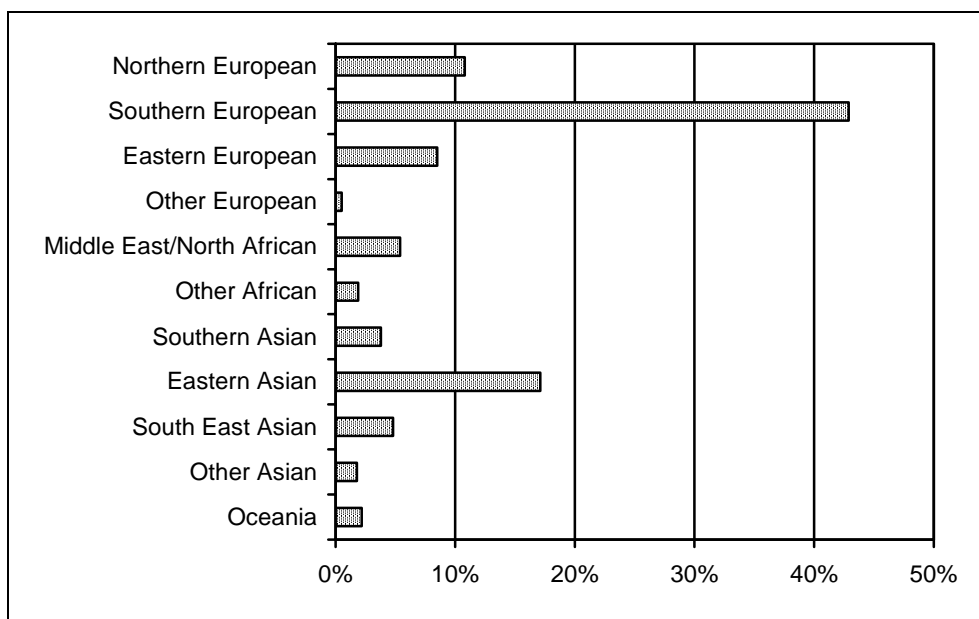
<sup>1</sup> Countries have been classified according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics* (Catalogue reference 1269.0)

## Languages

Most New South Wales solicitors speak English only (76%). However, there are at least 74 other languages spoken in 11 major language groupings.<sup>2</sup> Amongst those who spoke a language other than English, the most commonly identified languages were:

<b>Language:</b>	
French	19.9%
Italian	9.7%
German	9.1%
Greek	8.8%
Cantonese	4.9%
Japanese	3.6%
Mandarin	3.6%

**Figure 4: Languages (other than English) 2002**



Information about the languages spoken by solicitors is collected at the time the solicitor applied for his or her first practising certificate. Although solicitors are encouraged to keep the Law Society informed of any changes in their membership information, including languages, this data may not always reflect a solicitor's current language skills.

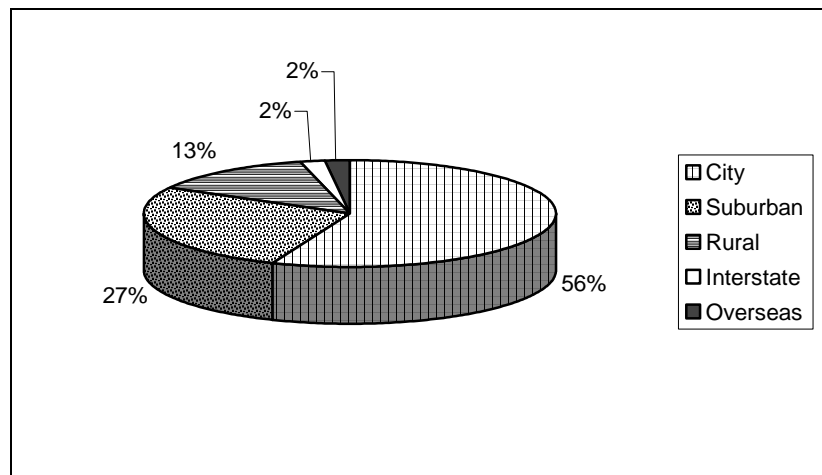
<sup>2</sup> The languages have been classified according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Australian Standard Classification of Languages* (Catalogue reference 1267.0)

## Location

More than half of the profession now practise in the Sydney CBD (55.6%). This remains stable relative to last year (55.7%).

The geographical profile of the profession in October 2002, is depicted in the following figure:

**Figure 5: Geographical Profile**



Since 1988, the proportion of solicitors practising in the Sydney CBD has increased by 5.7 percentage points. By comparison, the proportion of solicitors practising in Sydney suburbs has remained stable (26.5%), and the proportion of solicitors practising in rural NSW has experienced the most dramatic decline (in proportion terms) from 16.7% in 1988 to 13.5% in 2002. Overall, however, the numbers of solicitors in each geographical zone has increased reflecting the overall growth in the profession. These changes are described in the table on page 14.

### *Location of Firms*

Since 1997, the Law Society has also monitored the location of private law firms (the figures above refer to all solicitors). In 2002, almost half of all law firms (49.1%) were found in the suburbs of Sydney and almost a quarter of the remaining firms were found in the city (24.4%) and rural New South Wales (22.6%). The following chart indicates the point change in the percentage of firms in each location.

**Table 5: Location of Firms 1997 – 2002**

<b>%</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>City</b>	793 (24.3)	807 (24.2)	828 (24.1)	863 (24.9)	880 (24.7)	895 (24.4)
<b>Suburban</b>	1,550 (47.6)	1,615 (48.5)	1,691 (49.2)	1,700 (49.1)	1,746 (49.1)	1,798 (49.1)
<b>Country</b>	747 (22.9)	775 (23.3)	793 (23.1)	784 (22.6)	817 (23.0)	829 (22.6)
<b>Interstate</b>	158 (4.9)	125 (3.8)	115 (3.3)	109 (3.1)	104 (2.9)	118 (3.2)
<b>Overseas</b>	9 (0.3)	9 (0.3)	9 (0.3)	6 (0.2)	11 (0.3)	22 (0.6)
<b>Unknown</b>	9 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<b>Total</b>	3,257 (100.0)	3,331 (100.0)	3,436 (100.0)	3,463 (100.0)	3,558 (100.0)	3,662 (100.0)

It should be noted the decline in the number of interstate firms is due to the introduction of the national practising certificate regime and changes in the coding of interstate firms on the data base (they are no longer coded as NSW firms).

There are a small number of firms registered as overseas firms (less than 1% of the total number of firms) so any change produces a large percentage variation that is not in proportion to their profile in the profession. The large increase in the number of overseas firms is based on a doubling of the number of overseas firms from 11 to 22 between 2001 and 2002. Twenty of these firms have one solicitor only.



## Employment Sector

The majority of solicitors continue to practise in private practice with solicitors in this category making up almost three quarters of the practising profession (73.3%).

The other major segments in the profession are corporate solicitors who constitute 12.6% and government solicitors who make up 9.9% of solicitors. The remainder worked in a variety of occupations such as teachers and Clerks of the Local Court (4.2%). As the table below illustrates the profile of the profession varies in terms of gender. For example, almost twice the proportion of female solicitors worked in government compared with their male colleagues. Higher proportions of women were also found in corporate practice.

**Table 7: Gender profile of each sector in 2002**

	Male		Female		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Private</b>	8,448	78.1	4,149	65.1	12,597	73.3
<b>Government</b>	841	7.8	867	13.6	1,708	9.9
<b>Corporate</b>	1,124	10.4	1,045	16.4	2,169	12.6
<b>Other</b>	402	3.7	313	4.9	715	4.2
<b>Total</b>	10,815	100.0	6,374	100.0	17,189	100.0

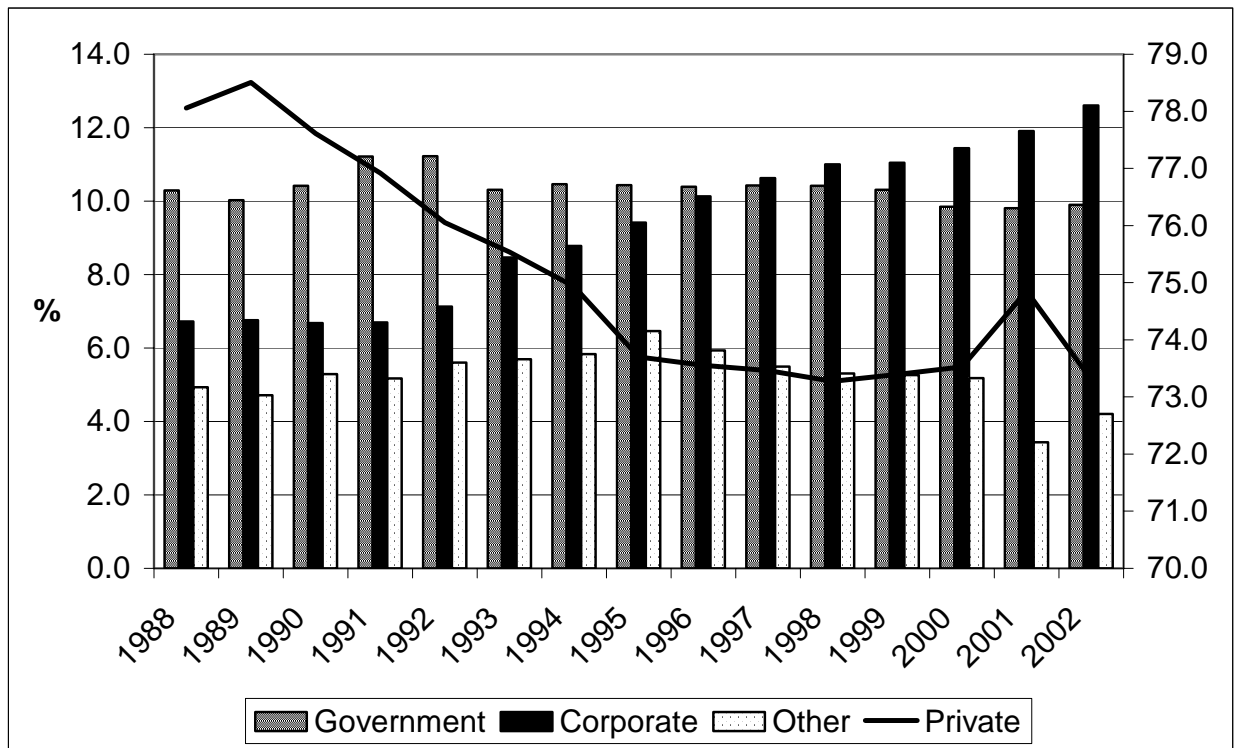
Since 1988, there has been a steady growth in the number and proportion of solicitors pursuing careers in government and corporate practice.

As can be seen in the chart overleaf the profile of the profession has changed in the following ways since 1988:

- Those in private practice has increased by 65%
- Those in government practice has increased by 69%
- Those in corporate practice has increased by 229%



**Figure 6: Employment Sector 1988 - 2002**



## Diversity in the Profession

There are many ways to measure diversity in the profession. However, this section of the report will focus on women and indigenous solicitors as the Law Society does not retain information about other indicators of diversity such as disability, sexual preference or cultural background.

### Women

As reported earlier in this publication (Gender and Growth), female solicitors now make up 37.1% of the practising profession. In the twelve months in the period ending 1 October 2002, more women than men entered the profession by obtaining their first practising certificate (54.6% and 45.4% respectively). Table 8 provides a snapshot of the female members of the legal profession.

**Table 8: Profile of Female Solicitors**

	Female Solicitors		Whole Profession
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Female Solicitors</b>	6,374	37.1	17,189
<b>Mode of Employment *</b>			
▪ Full Time	2,433	83.2	89.2
▪ Part Time	430	14.7	8.7
▪ Other	61	2.1	2.1
<b>Type of Employment:</b>			
▪ Private	4,149	65.1	73.3
▪ Government	867	13.6	9.9
▪ Corporate	1,045	16.4	12.6
▪ Other	313	4.9	4.2
<b>Profile of Private Practitioners</b>			
▪ Partners	450	7.1	19.1
▪ Sole practitioners	500	7.8	16.3
▪ Employees	3,199	50.2	37.8
<b>Size of Law Firm</b>			
▪ Sole Practitioner	1,039	25.0	33.6
▪ 2 – 4 Partners	691	16.7	4.2
▪ 5 – 10 Partners	331	7.9	7.9
▪ 11 – 20 Partners	193	4.6	21.0
▪ 21 + Partners	1,898	45.7	33.3
<b>Years Since Admission (average)</b>			
▪ less than 1 year	1,399	21.9	15.2
▪ 1 – less than 3 years	1,100	17.3	12.9
▪ 3 – less than 7 years	1,229	19.3	14.8
▪ 7 – 14 years	1,476	23.2	20.3
▪ 15+ years	1,170	18.4	36.8
<b>Age (average)</b>	36.3 years		41 years
<b>Income * (mean full time workers)</b>	\$75,700		\$86,100

- indicates data from the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey.

## *Indigenous Solicitors*

In the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey, 35 (or 0.5%) solicitors identified themselves as Aboriginal Australians and 16 solicitors (or 0.2%) identified themselves as Torres Strait Islanders. The following information summarises the responses of these 51 practitioners. These figures should be read with caution as the numbers are very small and as such there is a level of risk in terms of relying on them or extrapolating from them to the broader population of lawyers.

### **Location**

- 47.1% practised in the city
- 5.9% practised in the suburbs of Sydney
- 15.7% practised in country NSW

### **Sector of employment**

- 60.8% practised in the private sector (private law firms)
- 39.2% practised in other legal employment (corporations, government or community legal centres)

### **Income (for the financial year ending 30 June 2001)**

- 29.4% earned between \$20,001 and \$50,000
- 25.5% earned between \$50,001 and \$75,000
- 29.4% earned more than \$75,001

### **Profile of private practitioners**

- 35.3% practised in firms of 1 - 4 partners
- 9.8% practised in firms of more than 20 partners
- the remainder practised in firms of 5 - 19 partners

### **Type of private practitioner**

- 19.6% were partners
- 17.6% were sole practitioners
- 23.5% were employed solicitors

## Private Practice

Seventy-three percent of the profession worked in private law firms on 1 October 2002. This section will focus on describing the profile of the profession working in this sector.

**Table 9: Profile of Private Practice**

	Government Solicitors		Whole Profession
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	12,597	73.3	17,189
▪ Male	8,448	78.1	62.9
▪ Female	4,149	65.1	37.1
<b>Mode of Employment *</b>			
▪ Full Time		91.4	89.2
▪ Part Time		7.9	8.7
▪ Other		0.7	2.1
<b>Location:</b>			
▪ City	7,136	56.7	55.6
▪ Suburbs of Sydney	3,076	24.4	26.4
▪ Rural NSW	1,951	15.5	13.5
▪ Interstate	340	2.7	2.5
▪ Overseas	94	0.7	2.0
<b>Age</b>			
▪ < 29 years	2,546	20.2	18.7
▪ 30 – 39 years	3,383	26.9	29.6
▪ 40 – 49 years	3,423	27.2	28.2
▪ 50 – 59 years	2,341	18.9	17.3
▪ 60+ years	836	11.4	5.7
<b>Years Since Admission</b>			
▪ Less than 1 year	2,010	16.1	15.2
▪ 1 – 3 years	1,579	12.6	12.9
▪ 4 – 7 years	1,680	13.4	14.8
▪ 7 – 14 years	2,239	17.9	20.3
▪ 15+ years	5,031	40.1	36.8
<b>Income * (mean)</b>	\$108,600		\$86,100

\* indicates data from the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey

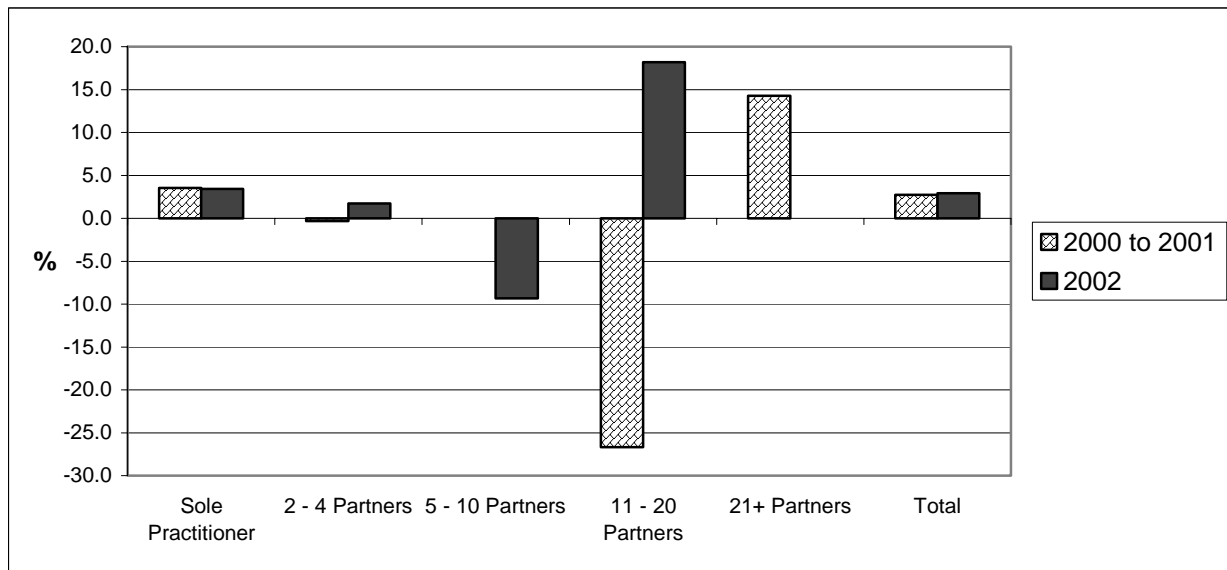
On 1 October 2002, there were 3,662 firms operating in New South Wales. Of these 81.2% were sole practitioner size firms (firms with one principal). The remainder of the sector consisted of:

- 585 firms of 2 – 4 partners (16.0%)
- 68 firms of 5 – 10 partners (1.8%)
- 13 firms of 11 – 20 partners (0.4%)
- 24 firms of more than 21 partners (0.7%)

This year there has been an increase in the number of firms with 11-20 partners and a decrease in those with 5-10 partners, perhaps reflecting growth in some existing firms. The number of firms with 21+ or more partners has remained stable this year, reflecting no change (0% change).

These changes are illustrated in the following chart:

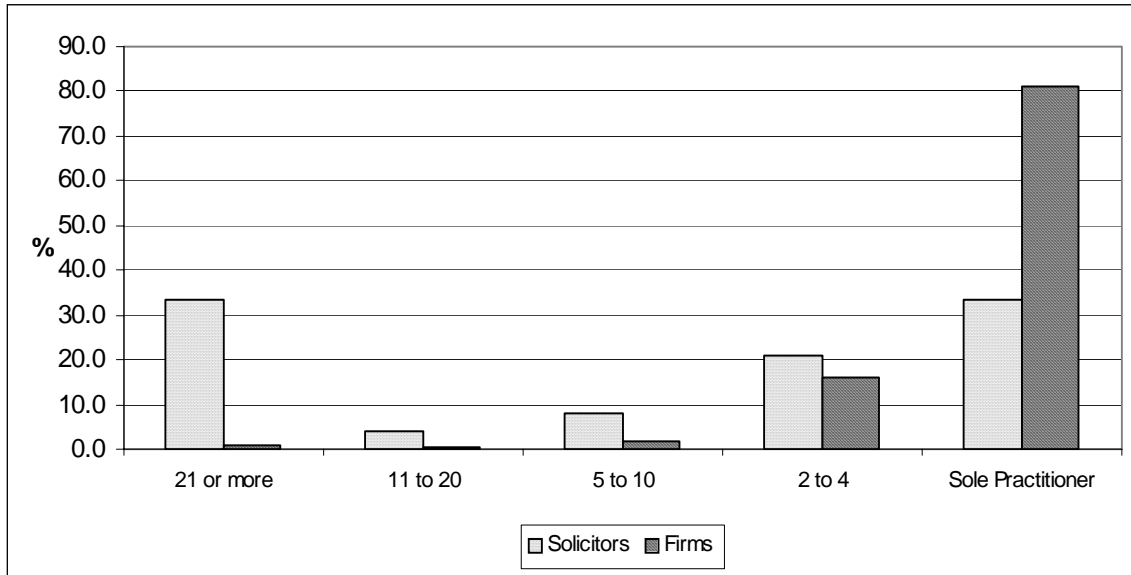
**Figure 7: Change in Firm Profile**



**Table 10: Firm Profile 2002**

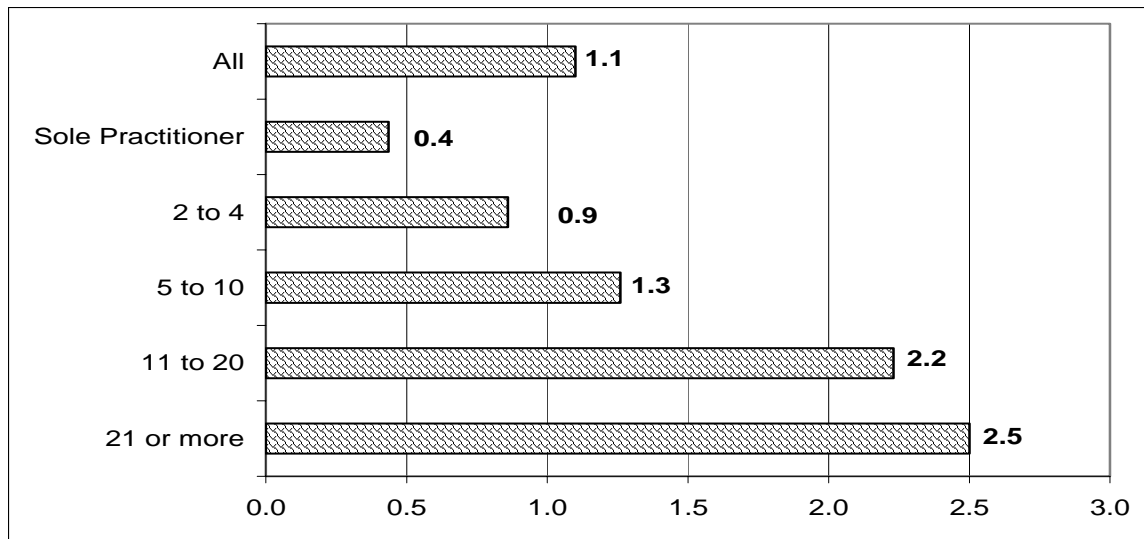
	Firms	Partners	Employees	All
Sole Practitioner	2,972 (81.2%)	2,875 (46.8%)	1,254 (19.2%)	4,307 (33.3%)
2 - 4 Partners	585 (16.0%)	1,434 (23.2%)	1,233 (18.9%)	2,704 (20.9%)
5 - 10 Partners	68 (1.8%)	447 (7.2%)	563 (8.6%)	1,016 (7.9%)
11 - 20 Partners	13 (0.4%)	169 (2.7%)	377 (5.8%)	547 (4.2%)
21 + Partners	24 (0.7%)	1,246 (20.2%)	3,092 (47.8%)	4,344 (33.6%)
Total	3,662 (100.0%)	6,171 (100.0%)	6,519 (100.0%)	12,918 (100.0%)

**Figure 8: 2002 Firm Profile**



The staff profiles within the private profession vary according to the size of the firm. In sole practitioner structured firms there is a lower ratio of employed solicitors to principals (0.4 employed solicitors for every principal). In contrast, in firms of 21 or more partners there is an average of 2.5 employed solicitors for every principal. This is illustrated by the chart below.

**Figure 9: Ratio of Employees to Principals**



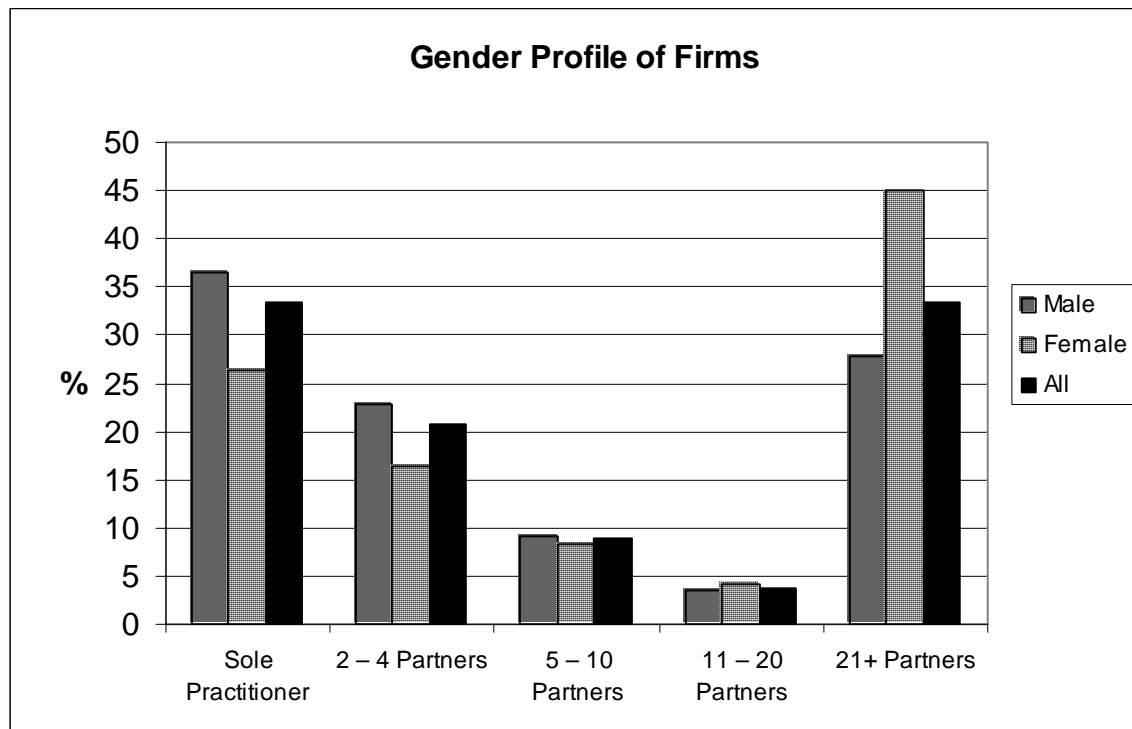
## Gender Profile of Practitioners in Law Firms

Amongst the profession generally, about one quarter of the private profession were working as employed solicitors in firms of 21 or more partners on 1 October 2002 (24.5%). The other major cluster of solicitors were sole principals working in their own firms who accounted for 22.3% of the private profession.

However, there were significant differences between the location of male and female solicitors within this sector of the profession. While male solicitors were more frequently found in small firms (35.9% of male solicitors), female solicitors were more frequently found in firms of 21 or more partners (45.7%). The gender profile is illustrated in more detail in the following Table 11 and Figure 10.

From Table 11 it is possible to calculate proportions in several ways. For example:

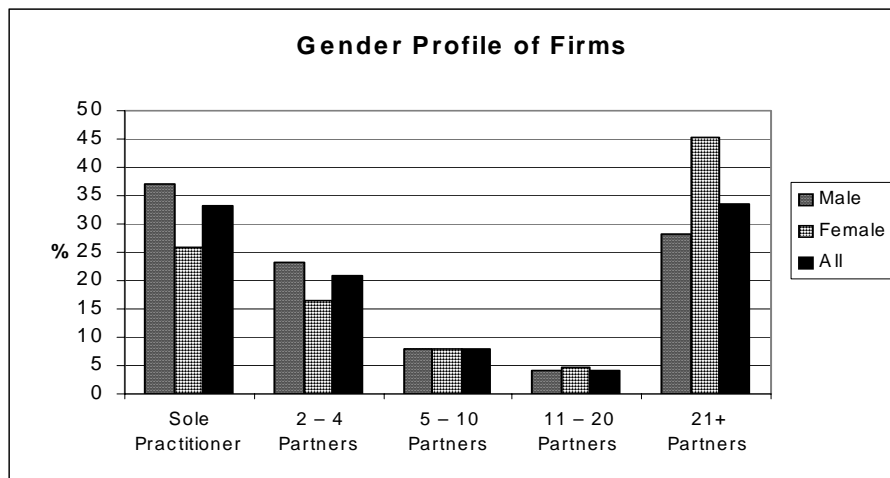
- 53.6% of female principals work in firms of a single partner (sole practitioner)
- 12.3% of female solicitors in private practice practise as principals in firms of 1 partner (sole practitioner)
- female solicitors constitute 18.2% of all principals in private practice.



**Table 11: Gender profile of firms**

	Female			Male			All		
	Principal	Employee	All	Principal	Employee	All	Principal	Employee	All
Sole Practitioner	511	528	1,039	2,304	726	3,030	2,815	1,254	4,069
2 - 4 Partners	154	534	688	1,251	699	1,950	1,405	1,233	2,638
5 - 10 Partners	54	277	331	392	286	678	446	563	1,009
11 - 20 Partners	21	172	193	148	205	353	169	377	546
21+ Partners	214	1,684	1,898	1,031	1,408	2,440	1,245	3,092	4,338
All	954	3,195	4,149	5,126	3,324	8,451	6,080	6,519	12,600

**Figure 10: Gender Profile of firms**

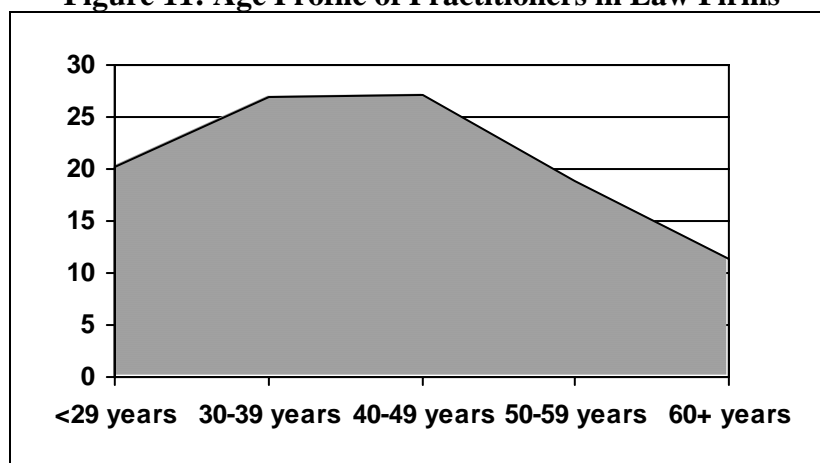




### Age Profile of Practitioners in Law Firms

The age profile of solicitors working in firms reflects the general age profile of the practising profession. Almost half of the solicitors in private practice (47.1%) were less than thirty-nine years of age. Approximately one-quarter (27.2%) were aged 40-49 years of age. Around one in five (18.9%) were aged 50-59 years of age and the remainder of solicitors in private practice (11.4%) were aged over 60 years of age. This information is illustrated in the following chart:

**Figure 11: Age Profile of Practitioners in Law Firms**



### Years since admission profile

The years since admission profile of solicitors working in firms mirrors the age profile of the private profession, with some interesting features. For example, about half of those solicitors who have been admitted for less than 1 year (52.3%) worked in firms of 21 or more partners. By contrast, almost half (45.0%) of those solicitors with more than 15 years of experience worked in sole practitioner size firms. Table 12 below illustrates the profile of firms according to years since admission.

**Table 12: Years since admission profile of solicitors in firms (%)**

Firm Size	<1 year	1-3 Years	4-7 years	7-14 years	15+ Years	TOTAL
21 or more	24.3	19.6	17.0	17.0	22.0	100.0
11 to 20	23.4	13.3	14.5	18.6	30.2	100.0
5 to 10	18.6	12.9	14.0	17.9	36.6	100.0
2 to 4	12.1	10.1	12.3	16.4	49.1	100.0
Sole Practitioner	8.1	6.5	9.9	19.5	55.9	100.0
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	16.1	12.6	13.4	17.9	40.1	100.0

## Government Solicitors

As at 1 October 2002, there were 1,708 Government solicitors working in 141 organisations.

**Table 13: Profile of Government Solicitors**

	Government Solicitors		Whole Profession
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	1,708	9.9	17,189
▪ Male	867	49.2	62.9
▪ Female	841	50.8	37.1
<b>Mode of Employment *</b>			
▪ Full Time		87.1	89.2
▪ Part Time		11.4	8.7
▪ Other		0.3	2.1
<b>Location:</b>			
▪ City	1,131	66.2	55.6
▪ Suburbs of Sydney	358	21.0	26.4
▪ Rural NSW	177	10.4	13.5
▪ Interstate	41	2.4	2.5
▪ Overseas	1	0	2.0
<b>Age</b>			
▪ < 29 years	199	11.7	18.7
▪ 30 – 39 years	533	31.2	29.6
▪ 40 – 49 years	621	36.4	28.2
▪ 50 – 59 years	290	17.0	17.3
▪ 60+ years	49	2.9	5.7
<b>Years Since Admission</b>			
▪ Less than 1 year	197	11.5	15.2
▪ 1 – 3 years	207	12.1	12.9
▪ 4 – 7 years	281	16.5	14.8
▪ 7 – 14 years	513	30.0	20.3
▪ 15+ years	510	29.9	36.8
<b>Income * (mean)</b>	\$67,800		\$86,100

\* indicates data from the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey

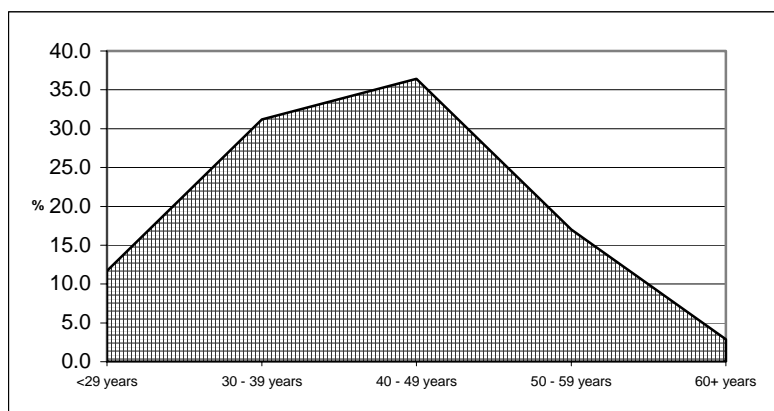
The following table and charts provide information about the number of years since admission and the age of government solicitors in New South Wales.

**Table 14: Years since admission profile**

Years since admission (%)	Male	Female	All
Less than 1 year	10.1	12.9	11.5
1 – 3 years	9.9	14.3	12.1
4 – 7 years	13.4	19.4	16.5
8 – 14 years	28.5	31.5	30.0
15+ years	38.1	21.9	29.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 15: Age Profile**

Age (%)	Male	Female	All
Less than 29 years	8.9	14.7	11.7
30 – 39 years	22.8	39.3	31.2
40 – 49 years	38.9	33.9	36.4
50 – 59 years	25.2	9.0	17.0
60+ years	3.7	2.1	2.9
No answer	0.5	1.0	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Figure 12: Age Profile of Government Solicitors**

## Corporate Solicitors

As 1 October 2002, there were 2,169 corporate solicitors working in 841 organisations. Below is a snapshot of corporate solicitors:

**Table 16: Profile of Corporate Solicitors**

	Corporate Solicitors		Whole Profession
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	2,169		17,189
▪ Male	1,124	51.8	62.9
▪ Female	1,045	48.2	37.1
<b>Mode of Employment *</b>			
▪ Full Time		91.4	89.2
▪ Part Time		7.9	8.7
▪ Other		0.1	2.1
<b>Location:</b>			
▪ City	1,249	57.6	55.6
▪ Suburbs of Sydney	759	35.0	26.4
▪ Rural NSW	107	4.9	13.5
▪ Interstate	23	1.1	2.5
▪ Overseas	27	1.2	2.0
<b>Age</b>			
▪ < 29 years	306	14.1	18.7
▪ 30 – 39 years	925	42.6	29.6
▪ 40 – 49 years	651	30.0	28.2
▪ 50 – 59 years	241	11.1	17.3
▪ 60+ years	37	1.7	5.7
<b>Years Since Admission</b>			
▪ Less than 1 year	277	12.8	15.2
▪ 1 – 3 years	291	13.4	12.9
▪ 4 – 7 years	446	20.6	14.8
▪ 7 – 14 years	575	26.5	20.3
▪ 15+ years	580	26.7	36.82
<b>Income * (mean)</b>	\$105,100		\$86,100

\* indicates data from the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey

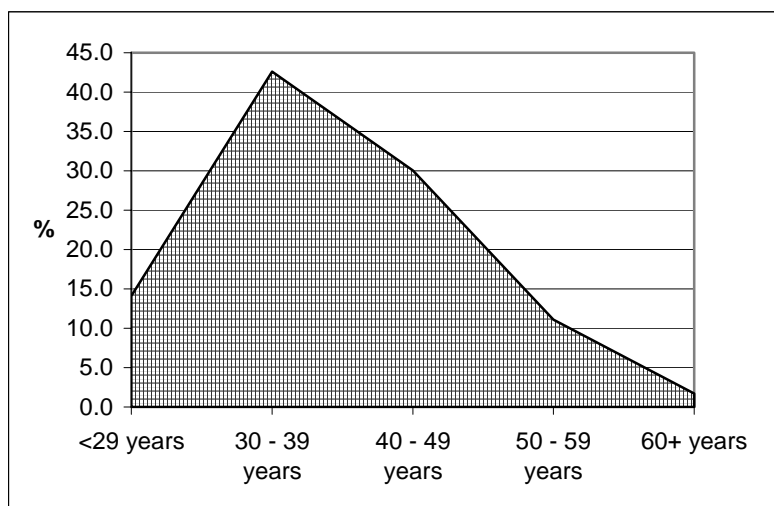
The following tables illustrate the number of years since admission and age profiles of corporate solicitors within New South Wales.

**Table 17: Years since Admission Profile**

Years since admission (%)	Male	Female	All
Less than 1 year	11.0	14.6	12.8
1 – 3 years	13.3	13.6	13.4
4 – 7 years	18.0	23.3	20.6
8 – 14 years	22.7	30.6	26.5
15+ years	35.1	17.8	26.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 18: Age Profile**

Age (%)	Male	Female	All
Less than 29 years	12.1	16.3	14.1
30 – 39 years	36.9	48.8	42.6
40 – 49 years	34.2	25.6	30.0
50 – 59 years	14.1	7.9	11.1
60+ years	2.7	0.7	1.7
No answer	0.0	0.7	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Figure 13: Age profile of Corporate Solicitors**

## Areas of Practice

Since 1993/94, the Law Society has invited solicitors to indicate up to four areas of law in which they spend 25% or more of their time (dominant areas of practice), through the annual practising certificate survey.

Conveyancing/property continues to be the most frequently nominated area (32.1%), followed by commercial law (30.9%), civil litigation (25.9%), personal injury (16.9%) and wills and estates (19.2%).

The list of the 'top five' areas of practice has remained consistent since the inaugural practising certificate survey in 1993/94, except for 2000/2001 survey in which commercial law and civil litigation were ranked 2 and 3 respectively and in the current survey where wills and estates and personal injury are ranked four and five respectively.

The table overleaf sets out the complete list of areas of practice from 1993/1994 to 2002/2003.

Over the nine year period during which this data has been collected, the changes from year to year are difficult to detect. However, if a comparison is made between 1993/94 and the most recent survey year, the changes are more apparent. Over this period, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of solicitors who nominate advocacy as a dominant area of practice (a fall of 5.5 percentage points).

Other areas that have declined in this period included:

- Civil litigation (-5.7 points)
- Conveyancing / Real Property (-4.7 points)
- Debts/Insolvency (-1.6 points)

In the same period, however, there are clear patterns of growth in other areas of practice. These include:

- Employment and Industrial Relations Law (+7.4 points)
- Criminal Law (+4.8 points)
- Commercial Law (+5.3 points)
- Intellectual Property (+3.9 points)
- Corporations Law (+2.3 points)
- Trade Practices Law (+4.0 points)
- Wills and Estates (+7.3 points)

**Table 19: Areas of Practice 1993/1994 to 2002/2003**

<b>Dominant Areas of Practice</b>	<b>1993/1994</b>	<b>1994/1995</b>	<b>1995/1996</b>	<b>1996/1997</b>	<b>1997/1998</b>	<b>1998/1999</b>	<b>1999/2000</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>	<b>2001/2002</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>
Administrative Law	n/a	3.7	4.1	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.9
Advocacy	12.1	8.9	12.0	9.5	9.8	9.1	9.1	7.9	7.7	6.6
Banking/Finance	9.2	9.3	10.0	9.4	9.8	9.3	8.6	7.9	8.0	8.5
Civil Litigation	31.6	29.9	31.0	30.1	31.4	29.3	30.3	27.1	25.9	25.9
Commercial Law	25.6	26.5	30.5	29.3	30.8	31.1	30.8	29.3	29.7	30.9
Corporations Law	10.4	12.2	13.4	13.4	13.6	13.8	14	13.8	14.0	12.7
Conveyancing/Real Property	36.8	38.0	36.1	35.5	34.7	34.0	33.7	32.5	30.1	32.1
Criminal Law	7.5	12.7	13.6	13.4	12.6	12.9	12.9	12.5	12.2	12.3
Debts/Insolvency	9.2	8.3	9.1	9	8	7.5	7.8	7	5.8	7.6
Environmental Law	1.9	2.9	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.7	3.0
Family Law	15.2	16.6	17.3	16.5	14.8	15.1	15	14.2	13.8	15.0
Immigration Law	0.8	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.8	2.1
Industrial Relations Law	1.4	2.5	3.4	4.6	5.2	6.9	6.8	6.8	7.3	8.5
Intellectual Property	3.2	4.7	5.6	6.3	6.4	6.8	7.1	7	7.1	7.1
Personal Injury	15.7	18.7	20.7	19.9	21.1	20.4	20	18.8	17.8	16.9
Planning/Local Government	2.4	3	3.8	3.6	3.6	4.1	3.5	3.6	3.5	4.1
Product Liability	1	1.4	1.8	1.7	2	2.2	2	1.8	1.7	1.5
Small Business	6.4	8.3	10.0	10.4	8.9	9.1	8.9	8.4	8.0	9.9
Taxation	2.6	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.3
Trade Practices Law	2.4	4	5.0	5.5	5.7	5.8	6.2	6	5.7	6.4
Wills and Estates	11.9	13.6	17.8	18.9	17.2	18.6	18.4	16.8	16.3	19.2
Other	4.5	9.2	9.0	9	9.2	9.7	9.5	8.8	9.9	10.0

## *Employment Sector*

As would be expected the areas of practice nominated by solicitors varies significantly according to the employment sector in which they worked (that is, private, corporate or government). The table below depicts the most frequently nominated areas for each sector (as indicated in the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey).

**Table 20: Areas of Practice by Sector**

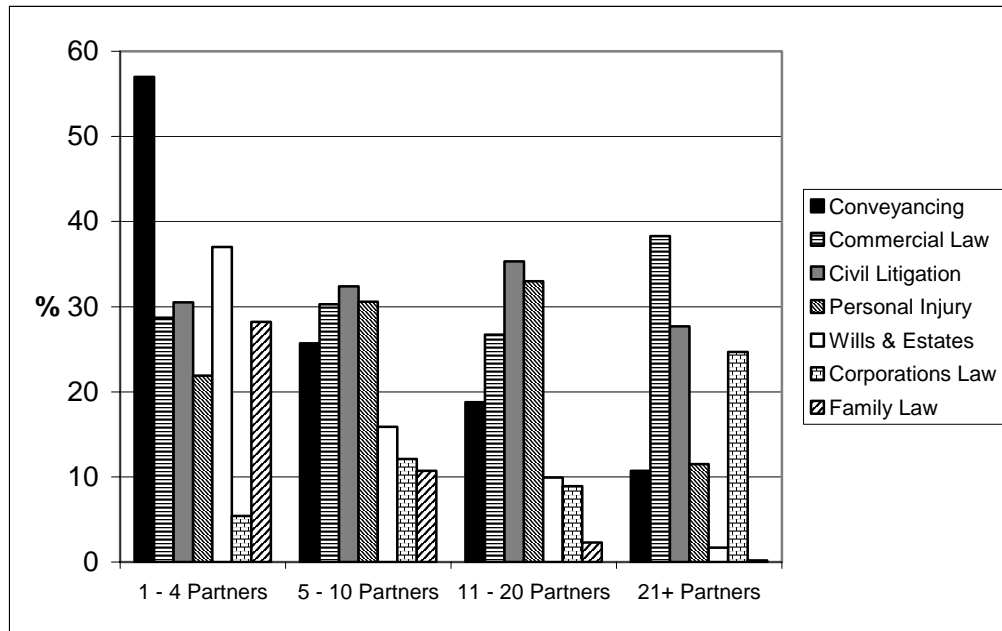
<b>Private</b>		<b>Government</b>		<b>Corporate</b>	
<b>Area</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>%</b>
Conveyancing	39.3	Criminal Law	44.8	Commercial Law	59.9
Commercial Law	31.0	Administrative Law	25.8	Corporations Law	33.1
Civil Litigation	29.7	Civil Litigation	15.8	Banking/Finance	24.7
Personal Injury	20.0	Other	18.8	Intellectual Property	23.5
Wills & Estates	23.8	Advocacy	13.0	Trade Practices Law	20.6
Family	17.4	Commercial Law	9.9	Employment & Industrial Relations Law	14.6

## *Size of Firm*

Not unsurprisingly, the areas of practice undertaken by solicitors in private practice also vary according to the size of the law firm. The variety of work also reflects the size of the firm. As shown in the figure overleaf, solicitors in the smallest law firms (firms of 1 – 4 partners), were more likely to nominate a greater range of dominant areas of practice than solicitors in large firms for whom dominant areas of practice were more often focussed on commercial law, civil litigation and corporations law.



**Figure 14: Areas of Practice by Size of Firm**



## Income

Each year since the 1996/97 Practising Certificate Survey, solicitors have been asked to describe “their real take-home income (i.e. after all expenses but before income tax) in the previous financial year”. Since the 2000/2001 surveys the question about income was asked in two alternate forms: one option invited respondents to write their approximate income, while the other asked them to select one of twelve income bands. Most respondents elected to indicate an income band. The overall income figures in this section have been obtained by adding both sets of data together. The figures for the 2000/2001 survey refer to the financial year ending 30 June 1999, the figures for the 2001/2002 survey refer to the financial year ending 30 June 2000 and the figures for the 2002/2003 survey refer to the financial year ending June 2001.

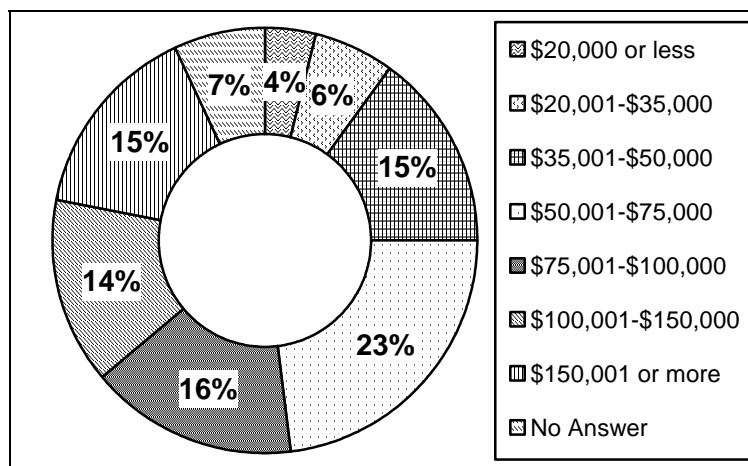
The past three years results indicate a broad pattern of increasing incomes. For example, the percentage of respondents reporting income of over \$100,000 rose from some 23% to 26% to 29% for the three years reported below. Overall, the mean income for all survey respondents increased from \$76,000 in 2000/2001 to \$80,100 in 2001/2002 to \$82,800 in 2002/2003.

A comparison of the three years appears in the table below:

**Table 21: Income for 2000 the past three financial years**

Income Band	2000/2001 (fin yr end 99)	2001/2002 (fin yr end 00)	2002/2003 (fin yr end 01)
\$20,000 or less	5%	4%	4%
\$20,001 to \$35,000	9%	7%	6%
\$35,001 to \$50,000	18%	17%	15%
\$50,001 to \$75,000	23%	23%	23%
\$75,001 to \$100,000	13%	15%	16%
\$100,001 to \$150,000	11%	12%	14%
More than \$150,000	12%	14%	15%

**Figure 15: Income for financial year end 2002**



## *Type of Employment*

The surveys reveal a difference between the incomes earned by solicitors according to the sector in which they worked. Solicitors in corporate practice tend to earn more than their colleagues in private and government practice with a mean income of \$105,100 compared with \$82,600 and \$67,800 respectively.

The table below summarises the mean income for the last three years:

**Table 22: Income by Sector**

	<b>2000/2001 (fin yr end 1999)</b>	<b>2001/2002 (fin yr end 2000)</b>	<b>2002/2003 (fin yr end 2001)</b>
Private	\$75,700	\$80,100 (av. increase 5.8%)	\$82,600 (av. increase 3.1%)
Corporate	\$96,100	\$100,000 (av. increase 4.1%)	\$105,100 (av. increase 5.1%)
Government	\$63,600	\$65,700 (av. increase 3.3%)	\$67,800 (av. increase 3.2%)
Average inflation rate	1.7	2.4	6.2

This data was also analysed to see whether, within each sector, annual average salary increases had kept pace with inflation. As is illustrated in Table 22, during the financial year ending June 2000, salary increases across all sectors were higher than the annual inflation rate for both the same year end (June 2000) and the previous year end (June 1999).

For the financial year end June 2001, salary increases across all sectors (the corporate sector in particular) were higher than the inflation rate of the previous year (June 2000), however not as high as the inflation rate of the current year. It will be interesting to note the results in next year's survey to determine whether salary increases take into account the high level of inflation experienced in financial year end 2001.

**Figure 16: Income by Sector**

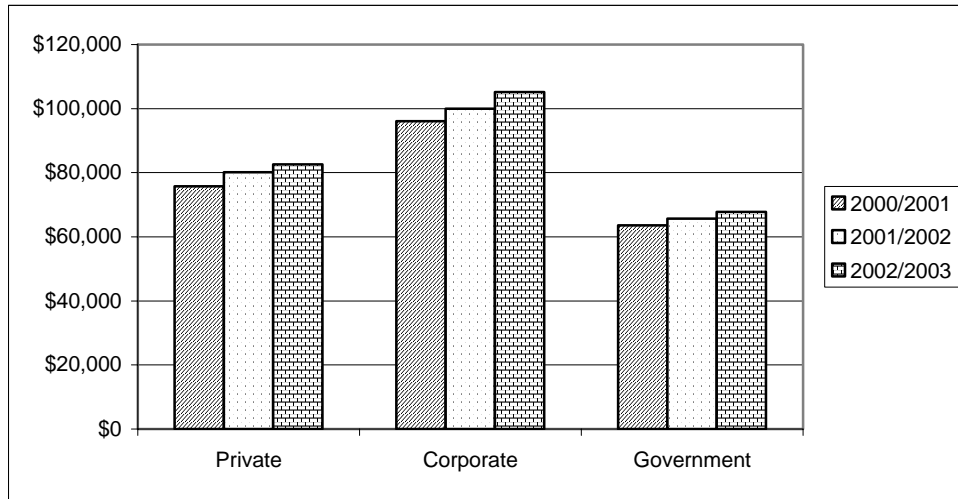


Table 23 below sets out the income bands for each sector:

**Table 23: Income bands for each sector**

	Employment sector					All respondents
	Private practice	Corporate	Government	Comm'ty Legal Centres	Non legal	
\$20,000 or less	4.8	0.9	1.4	6.7	4.6	4.1
\$20,001 to \$35,000	6.9	1.3	4.6	13.5	9.9	6.3
\$35,001 to \$50,000	15.4	8.2	17.2	35.6	11.3	15.1
\$50,001 to \$75,000	21.1	14.5	46.5	25.0	21.2	23.0
\$75,001 to \$100,000	15.5	19.9	20.4	4.8	12.6	16.1
\$100,001 to \$150,000	13.7	25.0	6.3	3.8	19.2	14.0
More than \$150,000	15.7	25.5	1.1	2.9	11.9	14.9
Not stated	6.9	4.8	2.5	7.7	9.3	6.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Est. mean income (\$K)</b>	<b>82.6</b>	<b>105.1</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>52.2</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>82.8</b>

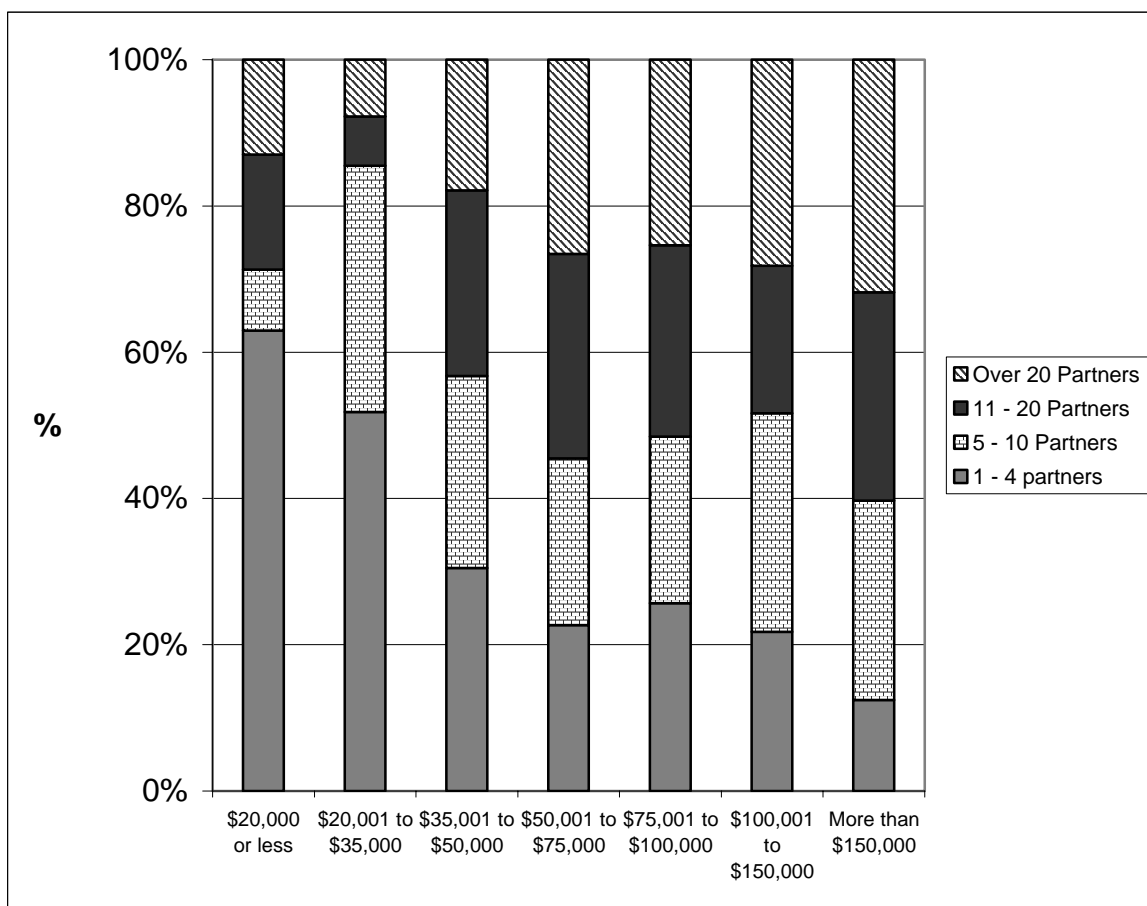
### Private Practice

The profile of the income earned by those working in private practice reveals that around one in three solicitors (34.7%) in firms of 1 - 4 partners earned less than \$50,000 in the financial year ending 30 June 2001. This represents an improvement over the last two years, when the percentage in this income band was 38.8% in the two preceding years. The chart below illustrates the income for the firm size groupings for 2002/2003.

The mean income for solicitors in each firm size was as follows:

1 – 4 Partners	\$73,700
5 – 10 Partners	\$91,300
11 – 20 Partners	\$91,600
20 or more Partners	\$97,600

**Figure 17: Income by Size of Firm**

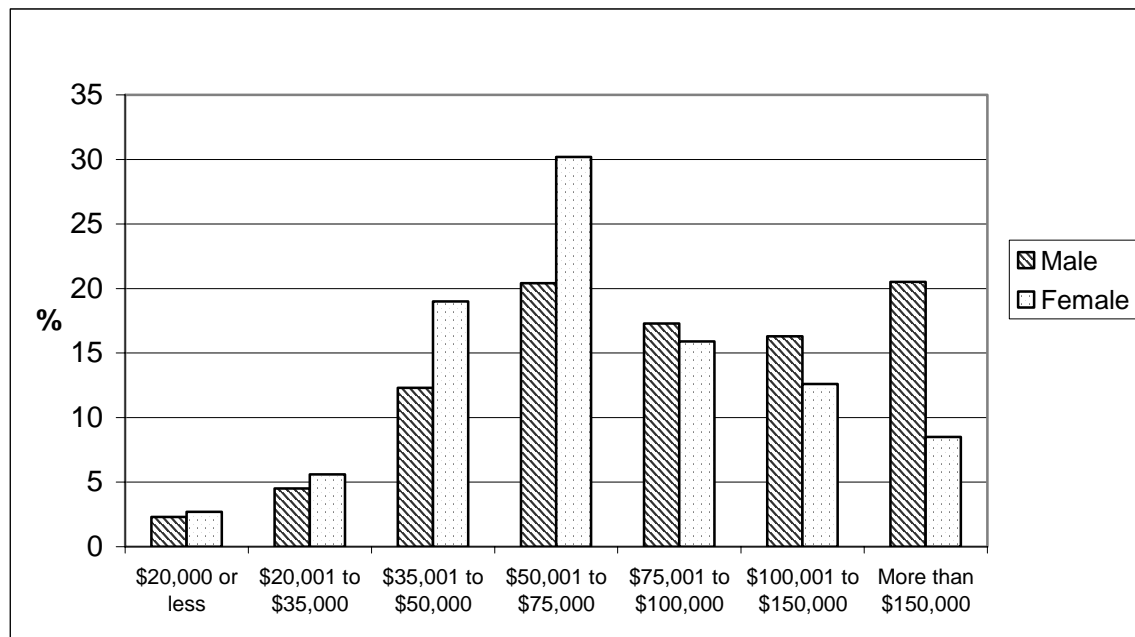


## Gender

As in past years, male respondents reported higher incomes than females overall. For example, amongst full time workers, 42% of men, but only 25% of women, reported incomes over \$100,000; 32% of women, compared with 21% of men, reported incomes of \$50,000 or less. Males reported higher incomes than females in all three sectors. Among corporate lawyers, for example, 62% of males and 37% of females reported earning over \$100,000. Among government lawyers, 21% of females and 15% of males reported earning \$50,000 or less.

The following figure illustrates the incomes of male and female solicitors working full-time across all employment sectors (it excludes those solicitors working on a part-time basis to enable a direct comparison): The mean income for male solicitors (working full time across all sectors) was \$92,000. The mean income for female solicitors was \$75,700.

**Figure 18: Income by Gender**

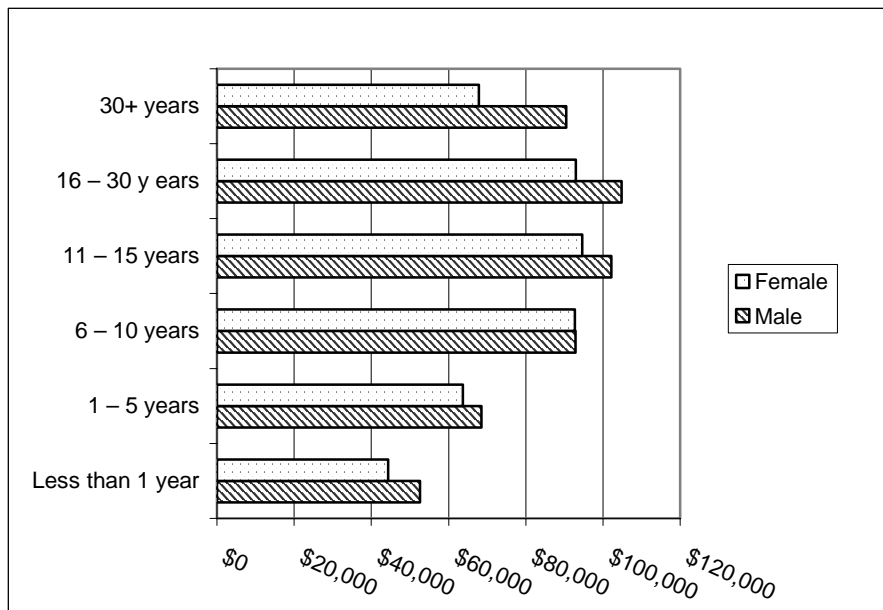


The gender difference in income is evident throughout all stages of the profession when income is analysed according to years since admission. The following table and graph illustrate the mean income for female and male solicitors in full time private practice:

**Table 24: Income by Gender**

	Male	Female
Less than 1 year	\$52,600	\$44,400
1 – 5 years	\$68,500	\$63,700
6 – 10 years	\$92,900	\$92,700
11 – 15 years	\$102,200	\$94,600
16 – 30 years	\$104,800	\$93,000
30+ years	\$90,500	\$67,800

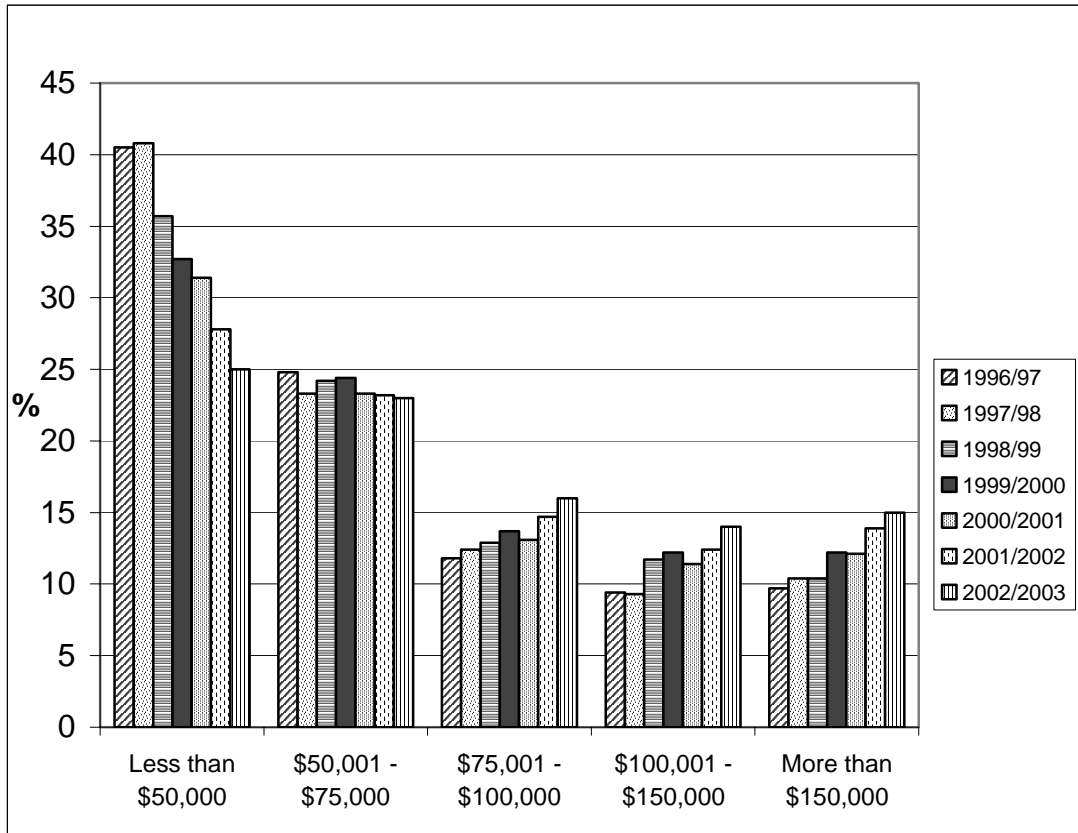
**Figure 19: Income (Gender and Years since Admission)**



There appears to have been a general improvement in the income of solicitors since data collection commenced in the 1996/97 Practising Certificate Survey. Each year, fewer solicitors reported incomes less than \$50,000 and more reported incomes greater than \$75,000.

Figure 20 illustrates the incremental changes over the 6 year period:

**Figure 20: Income 1996/97 to 2002/2003**





## Areas of Practice

The data collected from the Practising Certificate Survey also allows an analysis of the areas of practice undertaken by solicitors in each income band. This information is set out in the table below. There are several interesting features of this table. First, conveyancing/real property is a core area of practice across all income bands, although reliance on this area of practice occurs more frequently for solicitors earning less than \$50,000. Second, the proportion of solicitors nominating commercial law as an area of practice increases with income levels reaching a peak for those earning more than \$150,000 at 46.3%.

**Table 25: Income and Areas of Practice**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Areas of Practice</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Less than \$20,000</b>	Conveyancing/Real Property	53.3
	Wills & Estates	39.5
	Family Law	26.8
<b>\$20,001 to \$35,000</b>	Conveyancing/Real Property	49.4
	Family Law	31.3
	Civil Litigation	28.2
<b>\$35,001 to \$50,000</b>	Conveyancing/Real Property	37.2
	Civil Litigation	28.9
	Commercial Law	24.7
<b>\$50,001 to \$75,000</b>	Conveyancing/Real Property	28.0
	Civil Litigation	27.3
	Commercial Law	24.5
<b>\$75,001 to \$100,000</b>	Conveyancing/Real Property	31.4
	Commercial Law	31.0
	Civil Litigation	27.0
<b>\$100,001 to \$150,000</b>	Commercial Law	40.0
	Conveyancing/Real Property	30.3
	Civil Litigation	23.8
<b>More than \$150,000</b>	Commercial Law	46.3
	Civil Litigation	22.7
	Conveyancing/Real Property	22.0

## *Remuneration and Work Conditions Survey*

This year, the Law Society also completed its second Remuneration and Work Conditions Survey. The survey had the following objectives:

1. To gather information on remuneration packages and work conditions of employed solicitors working in private, corporate and government practice throughout New South Wales
2. To publish this information in a form that will assist employers and employees to make decisions about remuneration.
3. To provide information about the remuneration and work conditions of employed solicitors to assist the Law Society to develop policy and members services

The survey contained five sections examining a range of remuneration and workplace policies and practices. These sections were:

- General demographic information
- Income and benefits
- Workspace and workplace policies
- Professional development and supervision; and
- Career satisfaction and career plans

The report outlines results based on 1,314 respondents, including a mix of females (54%) and males (42%), aged 34 years on average. The majority of the respondents worked in private practice in Sydney city and 78% had been admitted as solicitors for 10 years or less.

Nearly the entire survey group reported that their primary place of work is in the office, with 5.4% working from home, or working both from home and in the office. The most frequently mentioned flexible work options included family emergency leave (reported by 59%), flexible hours (48%), use of sick leave to attend family commitments (44%), part-time employment (43%) and telecommuting (30%).

Paid maternity leave was reportedly available to 28% of participants at an average of 10 weeks.

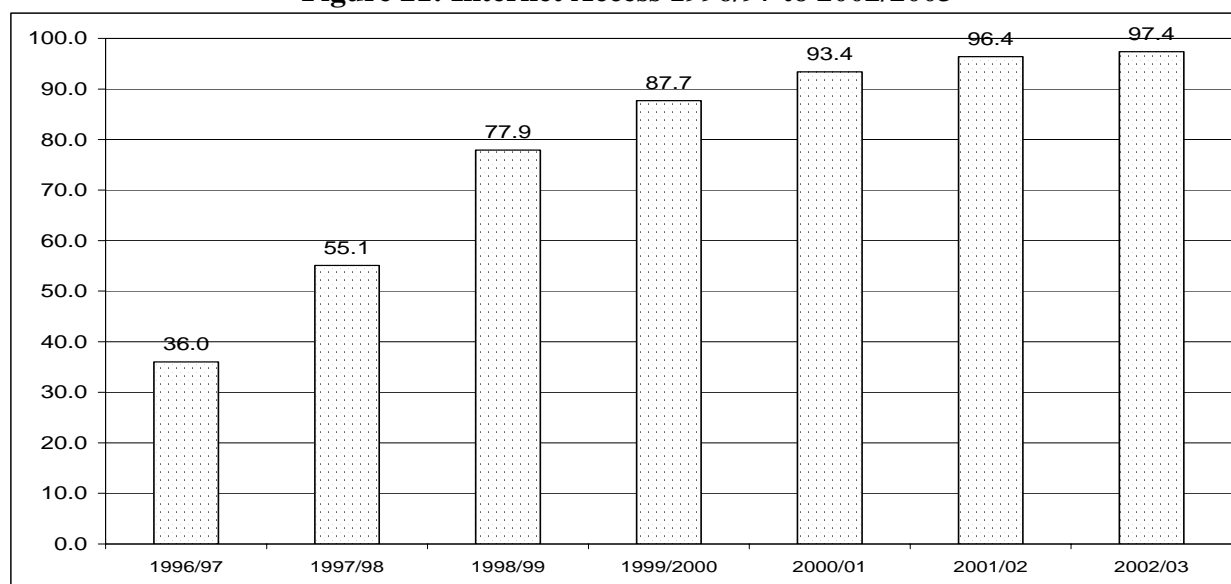
Under one-quarter of respondents surveyed reported experiencing discrimination, harassment or bullying in the 12 months prior to the survey. Forty-three per cent of those who experienced harassment, discrimination or bullying reported the incident. However, only 21% of those who reported the incident were satisfied with the method in which their complaint was treated.

The complete report is available only to Law Society members. The report can be downloaded from the Law Society's Members only section on the web site.

## Internet and Email

Over the last 7 years, the profession has rapidly adopted the internet. In 1996/97 (when the question was first posed), only 36% of the profession had access. In the most recent survey, this proportion had risen to 97.4%, with almost 100% take up rates in the corporate sector. The changes in the profession are illustrated in the figure below:

**Figure 21: Internet Access 1996/97 to 2002/2003**



**Table 26: Internet Access (by Size of Firm and Location)**

Size of firm	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
1 - 4	35.6	40.0	69.2	83.4	90.5	94.9	96.0
5 - 10	56.7	66.0	88.6	94.5	98.4	98.6	99.3
11 - 20	82.0	83.6	95.9	98.0	99.2	99.4	100.0
21+	83.9	82.3	95.3	98.3	98.7	99.7	99.8
Location	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
City	62.7	68.5	87.8	92.8	96.4	98.0	98.5
Suburbs	32.3	36.3	62.3	79.6	88.5	93.5	95.6
Rural	43.7	40.4	72.4	82.7	91.4	96.5	96.1
Use of internet	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
E-mail	-	44.0	59.0	71.0	80.0	87.0	90.0
Legal research	-	47.0	60.0	71.0	77.0	82.0	85.0
Web browsing	-	26.0	41.0	51.0	55.0	57.0	62.0
Discussions	-	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	6.0

The profession uses the internet for electronic mail (90%), legal research (85%), web browsing (62%) and discussion groups (6%). As is illustrated in Table 26, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of solicitors who report regularly using email. The proportion of regular users of the internet for legal research and web browsing has also continued to grow, however to a lesser extent. The number of solicitors who report using the internet regularly for discussion groups has remained low since 1997/8.

Email is now prevalent throughout the legal profession. Ninety-five percent of respondents to the 2002/2003 Practising Certificate Survey reported that they had email at work. Groups with lower access to email at work included:

- Older practitioners – those over 50 years of age (89.5%)
- Suburban practitioners (91.1%)
- Rural NSW - not including major towns (89.8%)
- Sole practitioners (86.9%)
- Those earning less than \$35,000 (85%)

Generally, however, the usage of email at work is consistently high throughout the profession as shown in the following table:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>% (yes)</b>
Private	94.8
Corporate	99.0
Government	96.5
City	97.1
Suburban	91.1
Country towns	95.8
Outside Country towns	89.8