THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

LAW SOCIETY RESEARCH UPDATE

Statistics as at 1 September 2011

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The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 1 September 2011. It is a summary of those solicitors who held New South Wales practising certificates as at that date.

Table 1: Practising Solicitors	No.	%
All Solicitors	24349	
Male Solicitors	13037	53.54
Female Solicitors	11312	46.46
City Solicitors	12674	52.05
Suburban Solicitors	7517	30.87
Country Solicitors	3118	12.81
Interstate Solicitors	118	0.48
Overseas Solicitors	922	3.79
Unknown		
Type of Practitioner[1]		
Private Practice	16972	69.70
Government	2829	11.62
Corporate	4545	18.67

Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]	<= 1 Yrs	<= 5 Yrs	<= 10 Yrs	<= 14 Yrs	15+ Years	Unknown	TOTAL
All	10.09	19.98	21.54	11.81	36.58		100.00
Male	7.82	14.74	17.96	11.41	48.08		100.00
Female	12.72	26.01	25.67	12.27	23.33		100.00

Table 3: Age[3]	<=29 Years	30 - 39 Years	40 - 49 Years	50 - 59 Years	60+ Years	Unknown	TOTAL
All	18.09	30.67	21.88	18.37	10.47	0.52	100.00
Male	11.86	24.40	22.80	23.90	16.57	0.47	100.00
Female	25.27	37.91	20.82	11.99	3.45	0.57	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]	Firms		Solicitors Working in Firms	
Firm Size	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	4242	86.59	6509	40.67
2 to 4	546	11.15	2860	17.87
5 to 10	68	1.39	1176	7.35
11 to 20	19	0.39	930	5.81
21 to 39	11	0.22	1082	6.76
40 or more	13	0.27	3449	21.55
Total	4899	100.00	16006	100.00

Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice						
	Female		**Male**		**All**	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Principal	652	10.27	2536	26.62	3188	20.09
Sole Principal	989	15.58	3219	33.80	4208	26.51
Pending Principal	10	0.16	35	0.37	45	0.28
Non Principal[5]	4695	73.98	3735	39.21	8430	53.12
Total	6346	100.00	9525	100.00	15871	100.00

Table 6: Firm Size	**Female**				**Male**				**All**			
	Principal		**Employee**		**Principal**		**Employee**		**Principal**		**Employee**	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	989	60.27	1132	24.06	3219	55.93	1119	29.68	4208	56.90	2251	26.56
2 To 4	244	14.87	812	17.26	1056	18.35	732	19.42	1300	17.58	1544	18.22
5 To 10	79	4.81	428	9.10	349	6.06	303	8.04	428	5.79	731	8.63
11 To 20	55	3.35	349	7.42	227	3.94	278	7.37	282	3.81	627	7.40
21 To 39	68	4.14	450	9.56	228	3.96	316	8.38	296	4.00	766	9.04
40 or more	206	12.55	1534	32.60	676	11.75	1022	27.11	882	11.93	2556	30.16
Total	1641	100.00	4705	100.00	5755	100.00	3770	100.00	7396	100.00	8475	100.00

Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details	**No.**	**%**
Solicitors with Practising Details	22879	93.96
Solicitors with No Practising Details	1470	6.04
All Solicitors	24349	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	689	2.83
Female Solicitors	781	3.21
City Solicitors	21	0.09
Suburban Solicitors	1036	4.25
Country Solicitors	164	0.67
Interstate Solicitors	50	0.21
Overseas Solicitors	199	0.82
Unknown		
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	997	4.09
Government	160	0.66
Corporate	310	1.27
Other	3	0.01

1. The 'Type of Practitioner' categories include unemployed and solicitors with no current practising details. Prior to May 2006 these solicitors were included in the 'Other' category. Table 7 provides a detailed breakdown of solicitors with no current practising details. If a person has a multiple status (i.e works for a company or government as well as private practice), it will be the private practice status that is shown in the statistics.

2. On 1 August 2003 the "years since admission" categories were changed. The category '2 -3 years' and '4 – 7 years' were replaced with 'Less than 5 years' and '6 – 10 years'.

3. Firm size is measured by the number of partners.

4. The totals for the number of solicitors in Table 4 differ from the totals in Tables 5 and 6, because Table 4 records those solicitors who work in more than one legal practice (that is, several solicitors are counted more than once).

5. Employees are recorded as 'Non-principals' (since the introduction of the Legal Profession Act 2004).

6. Table 7 details the holders of NSW practising certificate who do not have any current practising details recorded on their records. These solicitors may be unemployed, on leave, working overseas or have elected to hold a practising certificate even though they are not practising.

7. There is a decrease in the number of solicitors in July each year. The practising certificate year ends on 30 June and solicitors may elect to let their certificate lapse at this time if they do not need to renew it.

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