THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

Law Society Research Update

Statistics as at 1 February 2010

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OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 1 February 2010. 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	23602	
Male Solicitors	12823	54.33
Female Solicitors	10779	45.67
City Solicitors	12155	51.50
Suburban Solicitors	7310	30.97
Country Solicitors	3010	12.75
Interstate Solicitors	133	0.56
Overseas Solicitors	993	4.21
Unknown	1	
Type of Practitioner[1]		
Private Practice	16568	70.20
Government	2778	11.77
Corporate	4253	18.02

Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]	**<= 1 Yrs**	**<= 5 Yrs**	**<= 10 Yrs**	**<= 14 Yrs**	**15+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	11.24	21.92	20.40	9.69	36.74		100.00
Male	8.51	16.31	17.31	9.27	48.59		100.00
Female	14.50	28.58	24.07	10.20	22.65		100.00

Table 3: Age[3]	**<=29 Years**	**30 - 39 Years**	**40 - 49 Years**	**50 - 59 Years**	**60+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	19.43	30.49	21.83	18.25	9.51	0.48	100.00
Male	12.45	25.25	22.81	24.28	14.82	0.40	100.00
Female	27.74	36.73	20.67	11.09	3.19	0.58	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]	**Firms**		**Solicitors Working in Firms**	
Firm Size	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	4006	85.69	6040	39.42
2 to 4	563	12.04	2764	18.04
5 to 10	68	1.45	1200	7.83
11 to 20	15	0.32	759	4.95
21 to 39	10	0.21	974	6.36
40 or more	13	0.28	3586	23.40
Total	4675	100.00	15323	100.00

Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice						
	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	614	10.31	2544	27.52	3158	20.78
Sole Principal	878	14.74	3079	33.31	3957	26.03
Pending Principal	17	0.29	33	0.36	50	0.33
Non Principal[5]	4446	74.66	3588	38.81	8034	52.86

Table 6	Female				Male				All			
	Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee	
Firm Size	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	878	58.85	1016	22.77	3079	54.76	1016	28.06	3957	55.61	2032	25.14
2 To 4	225	15.08	709	15.89	1102	19.60	701	19.36	1327	18.65	1410	17.44
5 To 10	78	5.23	444	9.95	356	6.33	314	8.67	434	6.10	758	9.38
11 To 20	40	2.68	304	6.81	171	3.04	237	6.55	211	2.97	541	6.69
21 To 39	52	3.49	414	9.28	227	4.04	261	7.21	279	3.92	675	8.35
40 or more	219	14.68	1576	35.31	688	12.24	1092	30.16	907	12.75	2668	33.00
Total	1492	100.00	4463	100.00	5623	100.00	3621	100.00	7115	100.00	8084	100.00

Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details	No.	%
Solicitors with Practising Details	21887	92.73
Solicitors with No Practising Details	1715	7.27
All Solicitors	23602	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	802	3.40
Female Solicitors	913	3.87
City Solicitors	23	0.10
Suburban Solicitors	1230	5.21
Country Solicitors	196	0.83
Interstate Solicitors	62	0.26
Overseas Solicitors	203	0.86
Unknown	1	
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	1234	5.23
Government	186	0.79
Corporate	292	1.24

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. From 1 August 2003 the "years since admission" categories have been changed. The category 2 -3 years and 4 – 7 years has been 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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