THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

# PROFILE

## Law Society Research Update

## Statistics as at 1 April 2010

THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 1 April 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 | 24043 | |
| Male Solicitors | 12984 | 54.00 |
| Female Solicitors | 11059 | 46.00 |
| | | |
| City Solicitors | 12189 | 50.70 |
| Suburban Solicitors | 7637 | 31.76 |
| Country Solicitors | 3072 | 12.78 |
| Interstate Solicitors | 139 | 0.58 |
| Overseas Solicitors | 998 | 4.15 |
| Unknown | 8 | 0.03 |
| | | |
| **Type of Practitioner[1]** | | |
| Private Practice | 16870 | 70.17 |
| Government | 2847 | 11.84 |
| Corporate | 4324 | 17.98 |

| **Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]** | **<= 1 Yrs** | **<= 5 Yrs** | **<= 10 Yrs** | **<= 14 Yrs** | **15+ Years** | **Unknown** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All | 11.15 | 21.91 | 20.44 | 10.11 | 36.39 | | 100.00 |
| Male | 8.39 | 16.32 | 17.29 | 9.71 | 48.28 | | 100.00 |
| Female | 14.39 | 28.47 | 24.13 | 10.58 | 22.43 | | 100.00 |

| **Table 3: Age[3]** | **<=29 Years** | **30 - 39 Years** | **40 - 49 Years** | **50 - 59 Years** | **60+ Years** | **Unknown** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All | 19.42 | 30.72 | 21.69 | 18.10 | 9.60 | 0.48 | 100.00 |
| Male | 12.48 | 25.31 | 22.61 | 24.20 | 15.01 | 0.39 | 100.00 |
| Female | 27.57 | 37.07 | 20.60 | 10.93 | 3.24 | 0.59 | 100.00 |

| **Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]** | **Firms** | | **Solicitors Working in Firms** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Firm Size** | **No.** | **%** | **No.** | **%** |
| Sole Practitioner | 4083 | 86.10 | 6196 | 40.33 |
| 2 to 4 | 556 | 11.73 | 2761 | 17.97 |
| 5 to 10 | 65 | 1.37 | 1168 | 7.60 |
| 11 to 20 | 15 | 0.32 | 752 | 4.90 |
| 21 to 39 | 11 | 0.23 | 1104 | 7.19 |
| 40 or more | 12 | 0.25 | 3381 | 22.01 |
| Total | 4742 | 100.00 | 15362 | 100.00 |

| Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | | Male | | All | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Principal | 608 | 10.19 | 2509 | 27.08 | 3117 | 20.46 |
| Sole Principal | 895 | 15.00 | 3126 | 33.74 | 4021 | 26.40 |
| Pending Principal | 23 | 0.39 | 46 | 0.50 | 69 | 0.45 |
| Non Principal[5] | 4441 | 74.43 | 3583 | 38.68 | 8024 | 52.68 |

| Table 6 | Female | | | | Male | | | | All | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Principal | | Employee | | Principal | | Employee | | Principal | | Employee | |
| Firm Size | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Sole Practitioner | 895 | 59.55 | 1044 | 23.39 | 3126 | 55.47 | 1063 | 29.29 | 4021 | 56.33 | 2107 | 26.03 |
| 2 To 4 | 225 | 14.97 | 718 | 16.08 | 1096 | 19.45 | 705 | 19.43 | 1321 | 18.51 | 1423 | 17.58 |
| 5 To 10 | 73 | 4.86 | 433 | 9.70 | 341 | 6.05 | 313 | 8.63 | 414 | 5.80 | 746 | 9.22 |
| 11 To 20 | 44 | 2.93 | 299 | 6.70 | 172 | 3.05 | 230 | 6.34 | 216 | 3.03 | 529 | 6.54 |
| 21 To 39 | 61 | 4.06 | 473 | 10.60 | 248 | 4.40 | 301 | 8.29 | 309 | 4.33 | 774 | 9.56 |
| 40 or more | 205 | 13.64 | 1497 | 33.53 | 652 | 11.57 | 1017 | 28.02 | 857 | 12.01 | 2514 | 31.06 |
| Total | 1503 | 100.00 | 4464 | 100.00 | 5635 | 100.00 | 3629 | 100.00 | 7138 | 100.00 | 8093 | 100.00 |

| Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details | No. | % |
|---|---|---|
| Solicitors with Practising Details | 21975 | 91.40 |
| Solicitors with No Practising Details | 2068 | 8.60 |
| All Solicitors | 24043 | |
| | | |
| **Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details** | | |
| Male Solicitors | 940 | 3.91 |
| Female Solicitors | 1128 | 4.69 |
| | | |
| City Solicitors | 24 | 0.10 |
| Suburban Solicitors | 1508 | 6.27 |
| Country Solicitors | 236 | 0.98 |
| Interstate Solicitors | 70 | 0.29 |
| Overseas Solicitors | 222 | 0.92 |
| Unknown | 8 | 0.03 |
| | | |
| **Type of Practitioner** | | |
| Private Practice | 1522 | 6.33 |
| Government | 217 | 0.90 |
| Corporate | 327 | 1.36 |

*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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