THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

Law Society Research Update

Statistics as at 3 May 2010

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The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 3 May 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	24196	
Male Solicitors	13049	53.93
Female Solicitors	11147	46.07
City Solicitors	12243	50.60
Suburban Solicitors	7682	31.75
Country Solicitors	3101	12.82
Interstate Solicitors	152	0.63
Overseas Solicitors	1004	4.15
Unknown	14	0.06
Type of Practitioner[1]		
Private Practice	16967	70.12
Government	2867	11.85
Corporate	4362	18.03

Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]	**<= 1 Yrs**	**<= 5 Yrs**	**<= 10 Yrs**	**<= 14 Yrs**	**15+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	10.82	22.05	20.74	10.17	36.22		100.00
Male	8.20	16.38	17.49	9.81	48.12		100.00
Female	13.90	28.68	24.55	10.59	22.28		100.00

Table 3: Age[3]	**<=29 Years**	**30 - 39 Years**	**40 - 49 Years**	**50 - 59 Years**	**60+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	19.39	30.77	21.62	18.07	9.67	0.48	100.00
Male	12.51	25.19	22.62	24.12	15.16	0.39	100.00
Female	27.44	37.31	20.44	10.99	3.24	0.58	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]	**Firms**		**Solicitors Working in Firms**	
Firm Size	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	4093	86.13	6176	40.03
2 to 4	555	11.68	2821	18.28
5 to 10	66	1.39	1183	7.67
11 to 20	15	0.32	763	4.94
21 to 39	11	0.23	1108	7.18
40 or more	12	0.25	3379	21.90
Total	4752	100.00	15430	100.00

Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice						
	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	608	10.12	2506	26.98	3114	20.35
Sole Principal	898	14.94	3134	33.74	4032	26.35
Pending Principal	28	0.47	43	0.46	71	0.46
Non Principal[5]	4476	74.48	3607	38.83	8083	52.83

Table 6	Female				Male				All			
	Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee	
Firm Size	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	898	59.63	1033	22.94	3134	55.57	1043	28.58	4032	56.42	2076	25.46
2 To 4	223	14.81	761	16.90	1088	19.29	733	20.08	1311	18.35	1494	18.32
5 To 10	74	4.91	435	9.66	346	6.13	320	8.77	420	5.88	755	9.26
11 To 20	44	2.92	306	6.79	175	3.10	231	6.33	219	3.06	537	6.59
21 To 39	61	4.05	472	10.48	248	4.40	306	8.38	309	4.32	778	9.54
40 or more	206	13.68	1497	33.24	649	11.51	1017	27.86	855	11.96	2514	30.83
Total	1506	100.00	4504	100.00	5640	100.00	3650	100.00	7146	100.00	8154	100.00

Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details	No.	%
Solicitors with Practising Details	22097	91.33
Solicitors with No Practising Details	2099	8.68
All Solicitors	24196	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	959	3.96
Female Solicitors	1140	4.71
City Solicitors	27	0.11
Suburban Solicitors	1505	6.22
Country Solicitors	245	1.01
Interstate Solicitors	81	0.33
Overseas Solicitors	227	0.94
Unknown	14	0.06
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	1550	6.41
Government	220	0.91
Corporate	329	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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