THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

Law Society Research Update

Statistics as at 2 August 2010

THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 2 August 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	23121	
Male Solicitors	12579	54.41
Female Solicitors	10542	45.59
City Solicitors	12068	52.20
Suburban Solicitors	7069	30.57
Country Solicitors	3002	12.98
Interstate Solicitors	104	0.45
Overseas Solicitors	876	3.79
Unknown	2	0.01
Type of Practitioner[1]		
Private Practice	16272	70.38
Government	2672	11.56
Corporate	4176	18.06

Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]	**<= 1 Yrs**	**<= 5 Yrs**	**<= 10 Yrs**	**<= 14 Yrs**	**15+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	10.62	21.05	20.65	10.34	37.33		100.00
Male	7.89	15.48	17.55	9.95	49.12		100.00
Female	13.88	27.70	24.35	10.80	23.27		100.00

Table 3: Age[3]	**<=29 Years**	**30 - 39 Years**	**40 - 49 Years**	**50 - 59 Years**	**60+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	18.61	30.38	21.95	18.64	9.94	0.48	100.00
Male	11.80	24.99	22.73	24.56	15.52	0.41	100.00
Female	26.74	36.81	21.01	11.56	3.29	0.58	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]	**Firms**		**Solicitors Working in Firms**	
Firm Size	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	4076	86.26	6190	40.24
2 to 4	543	11.49	2799	18.19
5 to 10	68	1.44	1221	7.94
11 to 20	16	0.34	874	5.68
21 to 39	9	0.19	845	5.49
40 or more	13	0.28	3455	22.46
Total	4725	100.00	15384	100.00

Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice						
	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	613	10.20	2496	26.99	3109	20.38
Sole Principal	898	14.94	3105	33.58	4003	26.24
Pending Principal	22	0.37	54	0.58	76	0.50
Non Principal[5]	4478	74.50	3592	38.85	8070	52.89

Table 6	Female				Male				All			
	Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee	
Firm Size	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	898	59.43	1054	23.42	3105	55.44	1065	29.21	4003	56.29	2119	26.01
2 To 4	222	14.69	771	17.13	1076	19.21	717	19.67	1298	18.25	1488	18.27
5 To 10	80	5.29	444	9.87	365	6.52	324	8.89	445	6.26	768	9.43
11 To 20	49	3.24	346	7.69	192	3.43	278	7.62	241	3.39	624	7.66
21 To 39	47	3.11	359	7.98	198	3.54	224	6.14	245	3.44	583	7.16
40 or more	215	14.23	1526	33.91	665	11.87	1038	28.47	880	12.37	2564	31.48
Total	1511	100.00	4500	100.00	5601	100.00	3646	100.00	7112	100.00	8146	100.00

Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details	No.	%
Solicitors with Practising Details	21772	94.17
Solicitors with No Practising Details	1349	5.83
All Solicitors	23121	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	645	2.79
Female Solicitors	704	3.04
City Solicitors	23	0.10
Suburban Solicitors	940	4.07
Country Solicitors	152	0.66
Interstate Solicitors	51	0.22
Overseas Solicitors	181	0.78
Unknown	2	0.01
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	886	3.83
Government	171	0.74
Corporate	291	1.26

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.

Prepared by The Law Society Registry
The Law Society of New South Wales
170 Phillip Street
Sydney NSW 2000
(DX 362 SYDNEY)

Tel 9926 0156
Fax 9926 0257
Email registry@lawsociety.com.au