THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

Law Society Research Update

Statistics as at 1 November 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 November 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	23785	
Male Solicitors	12858	54.06
Female Solicitors	10927	45.94
City Solicitors	12311	51.76
Suburban Solicitors	7369	30.98
Country Solicitors	3061	12.87
Interstate Solicitors	118	0.50
Overseas Solicitors	924	3.88
Unknown	2	0.01
Type of Practitioner[1]		
Private Practice	16681	70.13
Government	2765	11.63
Corporate	4338	18.24

Table 2: Years Since Admission[2]	**<= 1 Yrs**	**<= 5 Yrs**	**<= 10 Yrs**	**<= 14 Yrs**	**15+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	10.26	21.21	20.92	10.95	36.66		100.00
Male	7.75	15.75	17.65	10.46	48.38		100.00
Female	13.22	27.64	24.76	11.52	22.87		100.00

Table 3: Age[3]	**<=29 Years**	**30 - 39 Years**	**40 - 49 Years**	**50 - 59 Years**	**60+ Years**	**Unknown**	**TOTAL**
All	18.60	30.69	21.79	18.38	10.04	0.50	100.00
Male	11.95	25.05	22.66	24.18	15.73	0.44	100.00
Female	26.42	37.32	20.77	11.55	3.35	0.59	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice[4]	**Firms**		**Solicitors Working in Firms**	
Firm Size	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sole Practitioner	4126	86.41	6360	40.63
2 to 4	541	11.33	2767	17.67
5 to 10	70	1.47	1306	8.34
11 to 20	14	0.29	722	4.61
21 to 39	10	0.21	930	5.94
40 or more	14	0.29	3570	22.80
Total	4775	100.00	15655	100.00

Table 5: Individual Solicitors in Private Practice						
	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	616	10.03	2502	26.69	3118	20.09
Sole Principal	932	15.17	3165	33.76	4097	26.40
Pending Principal	14	0.23	21	0.22	35	0.23
Non Principal[5]	4582	74.58	3688	39.33	8270	53.29

Table 6	Female				Male				All			
	Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee	
Firm Size	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	932	60.21	1105	24.04	3165	55.85	1092	29.44	4097	56.78	2197	26.45
2 To 4	227	14.66	761	16.56	1058	18.67	705	19.01	1285	17.81	1466	17.65
5 To 10	78	5.04	483	10.51	378	6.67	352	9.49	456	6.32	835	10.05
11 To 20	39	2.52	281	6.11	169	2.98	226	6.09	208	2.88	507	6.10
21 To 39	51	3.29	392	8.53	200	3.53	268	7.23	251	3.48	660	7.95
40 or more	221	14.28	1574	34.25	697	12.30	1066	28.74	918	12.72	2640	31.79
Total	1548	100.00	4596	100.00	5667	100.00	3709	100.00	7215	100.00	8305	100.00

Table 7: Solicitors with No Practising Details	No.	%
Solicitors with Practising Details	22202	93.34
Solicitors with No Practising Details	1583	6.66
All Solicitors	23785	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	732	3.08
Female Solicitors	851	3.58
City Solicitors	28	0.12
Suburban Solicitors	1106	4.65
Country Solicitors	168	0.71
Interstate Solicitors	58	0.24
Overseas Solicitors	221	0.93
Unknown	2	0.01
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	1048	4.41
Government	188	0.79
Corporate	346	1.45

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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