



THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PROFILE

LAW SOCIETY RESEARCH UPDATE

Statistics as at 2 November 2011



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The following data about practising solicitors was drawn from the Law Society's database on 2 November 2011. 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	24753	
Male Solicitors	13191	53.29
Female Solicitors	11562	46.71
City Solicitors	12813	51.76
Suburban Solicitors	7692	31.08
Country Solicitors	3158	12.76
Interstate Solicitors	129	0.52
Overseas Solicitors	960	3.88
Unknown	1	
Type of Practitioner¹		
Private Practice	17257	69.72
Government	2852	11.52
Corporate	4643	18.76

Table 2: Years Since Admission²	<= 1 Yrs	<= 5 Yrs	<= 10 Yrs	<= 14 Yrs	15+ Years	Unknown	TOTAL
All	10.05	20.11	21.57	11.81	36.46		100.00
Male	7.79	14.91	17.93	11.41	47.96		100.00
Female	12.63	26.05	25.71	12.27	23.34		100.00

Table 3: Age³	<=29 Years	30 - 39 Years	40 - 49 Years	50 - 59 Years	60+ Years	Unknown	TOTAL
All	17.95	30.88	21.86	18.19	10.60	0.52	100.00
Male	11.80	24.55	22.67	23.70	16.81	0.48	100.00
Female	24.97	38.10	20.93	11.91	3.52	0.57	100.00

Table 4: Profile of Private Practice⁴	Firms		Solicitors Working in Firms	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	4281	86.57	6556	40.51
2 to 4	552	11.16	2924	18.07
5 to 10	69	1.40	1201	7.42
11 to 20	18	0.36	897	5.54
21 to 39	12	0.24	1137	7.03
40 or more	13	0.26	3468	21.43
Total	4945	100.00	16183	100.00

	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	655	10.18	2552	26.58	3207	20.00
Sole Principal	1006	15.63	3229	33.63	4235	26.40
Pending Principal	24	0.37	36	0.37	60	0.37
Non Principal ⁵	4752	73.82	3785	39.42	8537	53.23
Total	6437	100.00	9602	100.00	16039	100.00

	Female				Male				All			
	Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee		Principal		Employee	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole Practitioner	1006	60.57	1159	24.27	3229	55.86	1114	29.15	4235	56.91	2273	26.44
2 To 4	247	14.87	831	17.40	1060	18.34	770	20.15	1307	17.56	1601	18.62
5 To 10	77	4.64	440	9.21	358	6.19	307	8.03	435	5.85	747	8.69
11 To 20	50	3.01	337	7.06	211	3.65	277	7.25	261	3.51	614	7.14
21 To 39	74	4.46	465	9.74	247	4.27	330	8.64	321	4.31	795	9.25
40 or more	207	12.46	1544	32.33	676	11.69	1023	26.77	883	11.87	2567	29.86
Total	1661	100.00	4776	100.00	5781	100.00	3821	100.00	7442	100.00	8597	100.00

	No.	%
Solicitors with Practising Details	23148	93.52
Solicitors with No Practising Details	1605	6.48
All Solicitors	24753	
Breakdown of Solicitors with No Practising Details		
Male Solicitors	748	3.02
Female Solicitors	857	3.46
City Solicitors		
City Solicitors	22	0.09
Suburban Solicitors	1143	4.62
Country Solicitors	173	0.70
Interstate Solicitors	52	0.21
Overseas Solicitors	214	0.86
Unknown	1	
Type of Practitioner		
Private Practice	1116	4.51
Government	159	0.64
Corporate	329	1.33
Other	1	0.00

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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