



Land and Environment Court

of New South Wales

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Commencement

1. This policy commences on 23 October 2008.

Purpose

2. The Land and Environment Court of New South Wales is committed to continuing professional development for judges and commissioners of the Court. The purpose of continuing professional development is to:
 - enhance professional expertise;
 - facilitate development of professional knowledge and skills; and
 - promote the pursuit of juristic excellence.

Application

3. The policy applies to all judges and full-time commissioners.

National Standard for Judicial Professional Development

4. A national standard or benchmark for the amount of time that should be available for each member of the Australian judiciary for professional development has been developed by the National Judicial College of Australia and endorsed by the Council of Chief Justices of Australia, Chief Judges, Chief Magistrates, the Judicial Conference of Australia, the Association of Australian Magistrates, and judicial education bodies throughout Australia. The standard is:

Each judicial officer should be able to spend at least five days each calendar year participating in professional development activities relating to the judicial officer's responsibilities. The standard was reviewed in late 2010.

This standard need not be met in each year but can be met on the basis of professional development activities engaged in over a period of three years.

This standard can be met, in part, by self-directed professional development.

Judicial officers should be released from court duties to enable them to meet this standard. However, judicial officers should commit some private time to meet the standard.

Further information on the national standard can be found at:

<http://njca.anu.edu.au/Projects/national%20standards/National%20Standard.htm>

Standard for the Land and Environment Court of NSW

5. Each judge and commissioner should spend **five days (or 30 hours)** each calendar year participating in professional development activities relating to their professional duties.

Meeting the Differing Needs of Individuals

6. There is a need to provide a range of education activities to meet the differing needs of individual members of the Court. Activities will be designed to address a range of topics and delivered in a variety of formats to assist in the development of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Accessing Professional Development Activities

7. To assist in meeting the target standard of five days (or 30 hours), the Court and the Judicial Commission will provide:
 - an annual conference of two full days (12 hours); and
 - a twilight seminar series which will provide 12 hours (2 days) of educational activities a year.

Generally, the primary focus of twilight seminars is to address topics of practical relevance to environmental dispute resolution, and a broader purpose of the annual conference is to promote the intellectual development of members of the Court, including addressing topics that challenge or expand accepted ideas and concepts.

8. The remaining day (6 hours) of continuing professional education may be met by members of the Court as they feel is appropriate in order to meet their immediate or long term needs in relation to their professional development, for example, by attending an external conference or seminar of relevance to their particular professional expertise or by presenting papers in their area of expertise to other relevant bodies.

Roles and Responsibilities

9. The Education Committee of the Court, subject to the Chief Judge, shall have responsibility to develop and manage the programme of educational activities conducted.
10. The staff of the Judicial Commission will advise and assist the Education Committee and Chief Judge, and act on their instruction to administer and implement the continuing professional development programme.

Evaluation

11. The Commission will evaluate the effectiveness of its programme of continuing professional development activities in order to:
 - ensure that it provides useful assistance and benefits to members of the Court in the performance of their professional duties; and
 - provide feedback to presenters to ensure their sessions meet the needs of members of the Court.
12. Members of the Court are encouraged to provide feedback on each educational activity by completing the evaluation forms which will be distributed. The evaluation form will request input on:
 - whether or not the educational objectives were met;
 - the programme's usefulness and relevance;
 - the program's contribution to the intellectual development of members of the Court;
 - content;
 - delivery;
 - practical benefits; and
 - improvements for future programmes.

13. The evaluation form will also ask for suggestions for themes or topics for future activities relevant to members of the Court.
14. Comments made by participants will be confidential although feedback based on participants' comments may be made available to the presenters, but not the verbatim comments.
15. An evaluation report will be prepared and will be based on a summary of the formal evaluation instrument completed by the participants and further observations provided from presenters and the Judicial Commission's Education Director.

Issued by

The Hon. Justice B J Preston SC
Chief Judge
Land and Environment Court of New South Wales

On 23 October 2008

Revised on 16 August 2013