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Introducing the Bulletin

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editorial

Introducing the Bulletin

Welcome to the first issue of *The ADR Bulletin*, a monthly newsletter dealing with the resolution of disputes. We hope that this will become another important resource in the development of ADR in Australia and we look forward to your involvement in the project.

Objectives and policy

The objectives of this Bulletin are to keep readers up-to-date with topical, practical and significant developments in ADR. Its broad focus will be on the resolution of disputes without resort to litigation and it is aimed at all professionals involved in dispute resolution, negotiation, conflict management, problem-solving and related activities, as well as teachers and trainers in these fields. It hopes to inform, advise, stimulate and provoke.

The policy of *The ADR Bulletin* is to air all views on the respective topics, without promoting the particular interests of any organisations, service-providers or professional associations. However, in the interests of networking, authors will be identified with their associations or organisations and contact details will be provided where possible.

Individual issues of the Bulletin will vary in content, some, such as the first, being of a generalist nature without a specific theme, and others having a specialist theme, such as the management of consumer complaints or the use of ADR in sporting disputes.

Terminology

A note here on terminology. There is an endless debate on the term 'Alternative Dispute Resolution' and its acronym 'ADR' and their rightful meanings and proper connotations. This debate will not be continued in these pages, unless as an incident of a specific

topic such as the marketing of ADR services. The current reality is that ADR has become a term of art which refers to all methods of resolving disputes other than court-based adjudication. While it was originally an acronym for Alternative Dispute Resolution it is no longer a term which signifies that we are dealing with 'alternative' processes, in the sense of their being exceptional or occasional or unusual — increasingly ADR processes are the standard, regular or mandated systems used by disputants and providers of dispute resolution services.

As regards the various forms of ADR, there are different, and sometimes hotly contested, understandings of the respective terms such as mediation, conciliation and case appraisal. It has been decided to refer in this first issue of the Bulletin to the suggestions of the National Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisory Council (NADRAC) in relation to common understandings of some of the ADR terms in contemporary usage. While definitions and understandings can never be static in a changing world, the NADRAC terminology and interpretations provide a useful point of departure for the present.

Editorial panel

As is customary with such publications, there is an editorial panel for *The ADR Bulletin*. Members of the editorial panel have been chosen because of their experience and expertise and because they will be able to provide some fresh

perspectives on ADR matters. While it is not a representative panel, the members do represent diverse interests in dispute resolution matters: academia and practice, the public and private sectors, law and management, community and commercial. Readers are invited to contact panellists directly about Bulletin matters. Members of the panel will also act as issue editors on an occasional basis.

Occasional features

There will be a number of occasional features in the Bulletin. These will include: Recent developments in ADR (new statutes, court decisions, industry standards); case studies in ADR; a discussion column; practical dispute resolution; forthcoming events; reports from organisations; and Views from the literature (including book reviews). The Bulletin will attempt to keep readers advised on significant developments abroad and to provide informed views on the future of ADR.

Contributions

A wide range of contributions are invited from readers, including articles of between 2000 and 3000 words, shorter comments, book reviews, case studies, practical problems encountered in dispute resolution, contributions to the discussion column, and letters to the editor. Organisations and professional associations are invited to submit information on their services, conferences, seminars and other events, and these may be included where space allows. Contributions may be submitted by email to:

laurence_boulle@bond.edu.au, to the publishers or to any of the editorial panellists.

I would also welcome feedback on any matters relating to *The ADR Bulletin* in the interests of reflective practice. ●

Laurence Boulle, General Editor.