



Round Table

Latest News

Family Law Practitioners' Association of Queensland

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Dear FLPA member

Merry Christmas to all FLPA members! In this Summer edition which you can read on your tablet by the pool sipping a cocktail or beer:



Check out what's new on the FLPA website – **Case Watch** and **General Precedents**.

See who made the grade and became an **Accredited Family Law Specialist** this year.

Check out the line-up for the "Raising the Bar" **ICL conference** on 8 February, read the run-down on the recent **ICL report** from the Attorney General's office,

Meet a member, and

Diarise the upcoming **twilight seminars and webinars** for early 2014.

You can also see what's been happening with FLPA **regionally** and meet the new **FLPA committee members**. And if you missed the latest **twilight seminar** on preparing and conducting a family law case, read up on what you missed.

Have a happy holiday season FLPA members. See you ready for 2014!

The Round Table team

Message from the FLPA president

The FLPA annual Christmas party was a wonderful way to celebrate the end of 2013, my first year as FLPA president. Judging by the almost 200 members who attended the Christmas party at the very popular Public Restaurant and Bar and the hour at which many people climbed into bed, the night was a huge success and demonstrated the strong collegial nature of our growing membership organisation.



Our recent FLPA annual general meeting held in November highlighted many of the wonderful achievements for 2013 to further advance the family law profession and the profile of our members. As president, I would like to publicly thank the 2013 FLPA committee for their hard work and dedication. Not only do the committee meet once a month throughout the year, they volunteer many hours to put together the events and activities from which we all benefit.

Although many committee members remain the same for 2014, I would like to welcome the **new committee members** and look forward to your help and ideas for a fabulous 2014.

One of the main events for 2014 will be the **29th Family Law Residential**, which is run in partnership with the Queensland Law Society. The dates for next year's event have been set for 8-9 August, so mark it in your diary now.

Other exciting FLPA events include the **ICL one-day conference** on 8 February, which has a fantastic line up of speakers and I urge anyone who is an ICL or works with ICLs to attend.

We have also had a fantastic response to our call for case writers for **Case Watch**. Thank

you to all who have volunteered to prepare these.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate those who have become **Accredited Family Law Specialists** and our immediate past president Deborah Awyzio on being elected vice president of the Queensland Law Society.

Until next Round Table, have a merry Christmas and a prosperous 2014.

Trent Waller
President
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New FLPA Committee members

Congratulations to the newly-elected FLPA committee for 2014. Comprising many familiar names, the committee welcomes a few new faces, including two official regional positions to better service our regional members.

2014 FLPA Committee

President – Trent Waller – M+K Lawyers

Vice president – Clarissa Rayward – Brisbane Family Law Centre

Secretary – James Steel – Barry Nilsson Lawyers

Treasurer – Peter Haley – Vincents Chartered Accountants

Immediate past president – Deborah Awyzio – DA Family Lawyers



Existing committee members

Dan Bottrell – Jones Mitchell Lawyers

Joseph Box – Grant Thornton

Fiona Cauley – Rice Naughton Buckley Lawyers

Clare Dart – Legal Aid Queensland

Rebecca Harding – Solicitor

And introducing our new committee members...

Committee member – Shannon Daykin – Damien Greer Lawyers



A proud family lawyer, Shannon began her career as a legal clerk in 2001 and found her place in family law after taking on the role of state manager of the National Child Abuse Prevention Agency.

As a mother of three, Shannon understands the challenges that modern families face, for clients as well as family law professionals. Shannon looks forward to assisting FLPA in giving family law practitioners a voice and keeping members engaged, stimulated and connected.

Regional committee member (north) – Kate Pateman – KLP Family Law

Working in Townsville and Mount Isa, Kate has been practising exclusively in family law for more than 10 years and has strong ties with the far north and north west Queensland.

Kate understands the challenges faced by regional practitioners, and



looks forward to being able to represent, advocate and bring to the forefront issues faced by practitioners across the region of north and north west Queensland.

Regional committee member – Stephanie Wilkinson – Best Wilson Buckley Lawyers



Based in Toowoomba, Stephanie has worked exclusively in family law since 2009 and completed the Collaborative Law training course in February 2012.

An active member of legal fraternity in Toowoomba, Stephanie has helped organise the Female Family Lawyers Lunch for practitioners in the Darling Downs region since 2011. As regional committee member for FLPA, Stephanie will focus on ensuring country members are able to access quality seminars, conferences and social events; improving professional networks throughout regional Queensland; and advocating for issues unique to regional members, including the availability of court resourcing, access to telephone and video appearances, local mediation projects, and awareness of local service providers.

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What did you miss at the last Twilight seminar?

Judging by the extended question time after the presentation, the twilight seminar and webinar on Thursday 26 September on how to prepare a family law case was extremely well-received.

Sixty-six family law practitioners attended online and in person to hear FLPA president Trent Waller and Judge Spelleken outline how to prepare and conduct a family law case in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.

To start the presentation, Trent emphasised the importance of giving correct and realistic advice at the first interview.

“Many clients’ ideas of the court process are confined to US court drama television shows. Be careful of opinions that you provide a client at the first interview,” Trent said.

“It will be these opinions that a client will remember and they will hold them against you when the outcome does not accord with your initial opinions.”

Trent advised that if you are not confident in giving an opinion at the first interview, do not give one.

He suggested saying something like “let me talk to my colleagues or principal and I will get back to you in 24 hours”.

To read Trent Waller’s paper from the twilight seminar, go to the Papers in the Members only section on the [FLPA website](#).



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Meet a Member!

MEET THE MEMBERS →



Barrister and mediator **Francois Mercier** is this Round Table’s “Meet a Member”. At the Bar since 2002, Francois practises in personal injuries, commercial law and family law. He is a nationally-accredited mediator and family dispute resolution practitioner, having conducted more 600 mediations in family law.

He practises both child-focused and child-inclusive mediation, the latter of which involves a child psychologist providing feedback during the mediation to the parents after having spent time with the children to determine how they are coping with the separation and current parenting arrangements.

Aside from his legal practice, Francois trains as a Shodan-ho Black Belt in karate and is a published author. To contact Francois, phone 0400 331 221 or email francois@mercier.com.au.

If you would like to feature as the next "Meet a Member", please email us at roundtable@flpa.org.au with the following information in less than 150 words:

- Your photo or business logo
- Your name and business name
- A brief description of your business
- Something interesting about you (that will get attention and ensure others remember you)
- A good reason why we should write about you.

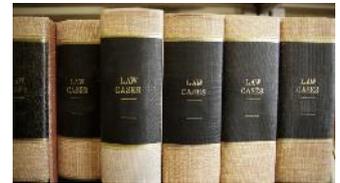
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Case Watch

As a result of our call out to members, we have a wonderful group of case note volunteers to prepare case notes for 2014.

From January, check out the new cases on [FLPA's website](#).

Thank you to the following members who have volunteered to prepare cases: Sarah Dibley, Carla Franchina, Paul Mason, Rachel Lusic, Peter Hooper, Anna Bertone, Kay Feeney, Ben O'Neill, Rebecca Harding, Phil Ridgeway, Caitlin Wilson, Ashley Ehlers, and Grace Lawson. It is people like you that make this association so strong.



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Heads up

A few new additions to the FLPA Website

Member search function

As more and more clients and referring lawyers are using the FLPA website to find family law practitioners, members have recently requested additional functions which will enable a search of the FLPA site for members who are:

- Family Report Writers and/or
- Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners (accredited and registered with the Attorney General)



If you would like potential clients or referrers to find you using the search facility on the website, please follow these instructions to update your profile on the [FLPA website](#).

- Log in at flpa.org.au using your user name and password. Click on the link if you have forgotten your details.
- Go to 'Members only' tab.
- Go to 'Manage your profile' tab.
- Scroll down and tick 'Report Writer' and/or 'Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner' as appropriate.
- Check your other details are complete and correct.

Please contact membership@flpa.org.au or 3806 1220 if you have any queries about updating your details.

General precedents

Also by popular demand, we're pleased to add a new page to the FLPA website called 'general precedents'. This page holds a number of draft affidavits, directional hearings, and

procedural orders. Please remember, these are drafts only. Members must use their own professional discretion when using these precedents.

To see these drafts, [log in](#) and under the 'Members only' section, go to 'General precedents'.

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The latest Accredited Specialists in Family Law



Congratulations to all family lawyers who this year passed and gained their Family Law Specialist accreditation.

Always a tough process, this year only 19 passed of the 55 who sat the exam. Notably, four of those who passed were from one firm, Michael Lynch Family Lawyers.

Elizabeth Millar, Amy Campbell, Clare McCormack and Amy Honan's (right) accreditation brings the number of Family Law Accredited Specialists at Michael Lynch Family Lawyers to seven, the highest number of any family law firm in Queensland.



President Trent Waller commended those who passed for their diligence in undertaking advanced study in family law.

"This specialist accreditation is a reliable way for clients to identify those family lawyers who have demonstrated their abilities and experience in a complex area of law," said Trent.

Congratulations again to the following recently Accredited Family Law Specialists:

Alice Drummond	Ian Field
Amy Campbell	James Steel
Amy Honan	Jerome Hey
Amy Sanders-Robbins	Justine Cirocco
Andrew McCormack	Lynn Armstrong
Clare McCormack	Rebecca Harding
Damira Hidic	Samantha Harper
Elizabeth Millar	Scott Wedgwood
Evette Clark	Tamara de Kretser
	Cathy Krieg

Regional round-up



Toowoomba ladies luncheon

FLPA once again supported the "Ladies in Family Law Long Luncheon" in Toowoomba on 25 October 2013 at Gip's Restaurant. About 40 women enjoyed a sunny afternoon and a three course lunch and participated in an informal question and answer style panel discussion.

Thank you to all the guest speakers – Judge Susan Purdon-Sully, Judge Margaret Cassidy, Judge Anne Demack and Judge Leanne Turner.

Rockhampton conference

The annual family law conference in Rockhampton on Monday 30 September was again a roaring success. Feedback from the 20 plus participants endorsed the entertaining and informative speaking line-up. Judge Demack again added the colour and excitement to the day.

Thank you to all the guest speakers and the FLPA committee for organising yet another fantastic and educational event.

What does the ICL report say?

Many of you would have participated in an Australian Institute of Family Studies survey on the use of independent children's lawyers (ICLs) in the family law system.



The report was released recently and examined a range of different aspects of ICL practice. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collated from ICLs, judicial officers, non-ICL lawyers, non-legal family law professionals (e.g., family consultants) and parents, children and young people who have been involved in a matter with an ICL.

Overall, 528 professionals across the various groupings contributed to the data collections, in addition to 24 parents/carers and ten children/young people.

The study found that while the Guidelines for Independent Children's Lawyers (FCoA & FMC, 2007) and statutory framework operate across the states and territories, there are often substantial differences in the policies of each legal aid commission, amount of funding provided and also in terms of how ICLs facilitate the participation of children.

Queensland had the highest total ICL grants of aid with just under \$23 million being spent in Queensland over the three-year period.

The study was clear that the role of the ICL is valued, particularly by Judges. The research, however, identified some concerns around the adequacy of accreditation, training and ongoing professional development. Unfortunately there were no recommendations per se contained in the report.

For more information, download the [full report](#). And if you're an ICL or work with ICLs, check out the [ICL conference](#) on 8 February 2014.

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FLPA events 2014

To register or find out more about upcoming FLPA events, see below and go to the [FLPA website](#).



Half day conference - From the first interview to trial

The Law Society Northern Territory is proud to present a CPD on **Family Law Practice and Advocacy 'From the first interview to trial'**.

When: 2.30pm to 5.00pm, Thursday, 23 January 2014

Where: Signatures Room, 2nd floor, Darwin Hilton, 32 Mitchell Street, Darwin.

RSVP: [Register here](#).

One day conference – 'Keith Slack Memorial Big Day Out for ICLs - Raising the Bar'

In memory of the late Federal Magistrate Keith Slack and his tireless commitment to ICL work, FLPA will run a practical and interactive one day conference to provide participants with a better understanding of the role of the ICL. In workshop style, the conference will draw on the experience of a great line up of facilitators including **Justices Murphy, Forrest and Hogan, Judges Baumann and Demack and Dr Daniel Varghese** and discuss the myriad of complicated issues that ICLs face.

Who should attend: All ICLs and all family law practitioners who regularly deal with ICLs or deal with parenting matters including family lawyers, family report writers and counsellors

When: 8.30am – 5.00pm, Saturday, 8 February 2014

Where: Mecure Hotel, Brisbane

Cost: \$200 members and \$300 non-members (includes membership)

All profits from this day will go to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in honour of the late Federal Magistrate Keith Slack.

RSVP: Monday 3 February 2014. [Register here](#).

Twilight seminar and webinar – Parenting Programs - Why do one?

World-renowned Professor Matt Sanders, director of Triple P-Positive Parenting Program, Parenting & Family Support Centre at the University of Queensland will talk about parenting programs: why do one and what types of Triple P programs are available. A must for all

family lawyers preparing parenting plans.

When: 5.30pm, Thursday 6 March 2014

Where: Vincents Chartered Accountants
Mark it in your diary. More details to come.

Twilight seminar and webinar – Dealing with Stalkers

Dr Michele Pathé, Clinical Director, Senior Forensic Psychiatrist, Qld Community Forensic Service will present interesting information about dealing with stalkers in the family law context.

When: 5.30pm, Thursday 1 May 2014

Where: Grant Thornton
Mark it in your diary. More details to come.

29th Family Law Residential

The 'must do' on the annual family law professional development and social calendar.

When: Friday 8th and Saturday 9th August 2014

Where: RACV Royal Pines Resort, Golf Coast
Mark it in your diary. More details to come.

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CSA estimators



The following link takes you to the Child Support Agency's Care Estimator and Child Support/FTB Estimator. Bookmark it for easy access and reference. <http://www.csa.gov.au/estimators/>

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Titles office website

The following link takes you to the Titles Office for industry professionals <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/property/titles/industry.html>. It includes:

- the **Land Titles Practice Manual**
(how to complete and lodge land registry forms,
- the **fee calculator**
(calculates the lodgement fees payable on land registry forms), and
- the latest land registry forms.

These forms change regularly. You can also register your details for an **automatic update**.

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