

## FOREWORD

HON NICOLA ROXON\*

Welcome to the fifth volume of the Victoria University Law and Justice Journal (*VULJ*). It is an interesting and innovative journal – committed to exploring a variety of legal issues from a diverse range of sources. Its approach of including interviews, speeches and academic articles makes it refreshing and engaging.

This variety and innovation is consistent with the mission of the University – to provide access to an education for those who might be the first in family to go to university, new to Australia or are coming back to university after a period of employment.

Both as the current Chair of the University's Sir Zelman Cowen Centre, and in my previous role as the Commonwealth Attorney-General, I believe passionately in our obligation to constantly question whether the law is accessible to the broader community. Often seen as a profession of privilege, we must ensure the education of lawyers embraces the breadth of our community and truly considers the needs of that community.

Our courts are most often the visible interface with the law and the community, so the *VULJ* series of interviews with the heads of Victorian Courts has been fascinating and timely. This series began in 2011 with an interview with Chief Justice Robert French and will conclude with this issue's interview with Chief Magistrate Peter Lauritsen. The series has included notable names such as President Maxwell of the Victorian Court of Appeal, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Marilyn Warren and the former County Court Chief Judge Michael Rozenes.

Such a focus may seem obvious to those familiar with the location of the Victoria University College of Law and Justice and Sir Zelman Cowen Centre, right in the heart of Melbourne's legal precinct. This presents students with opportunities to learn from a variety of current practitioners and field experts and to do placements in the courts.

The Sir Zelman Cowen Centre has recently taken this focus on the Courts a step further with the establishment of the Courts and Tribunals Academy – launched by the Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove and the Chief Justice Marilyn Warren in 2015. The Academy will be a Centre of excellence and learning on aspects of court management and contemporary issues.

Don't forget that the *VULJ* has now extended its reach, becoming available via Hein-Online, Austlii and AGIS+Text. Of course, the journal remains available on its primary website (<https://vulj.vu.edu.au>) and is very proud to report having over 38 000 page visits since being launched globally.

With the conclusion of *VULJ*'s interview series and five timely and thought-provoking articles, this issue promises to be an interesting and educational read.

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