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## WORKING TOGETHER

When what has become the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies was first mooted those who advocated its establishment were firmly of the view that, in addition to being a library and centre for research, it should be concerned with the development and dissemination of legal information, particularly to the profession and judiciary. It was also the view of those early supporters that the Institute should operate not only nationally, but throughout the Empire! Today, the reach of the Institute is, I am pleased to say, somewhat more extensive than what is left of the British Empire. While the library, over the years, has become what is de facto our national law library and the Institute has in one way or another made its contribution to legal research, discharging its given role as a disseminator of legal information has proved to be rather more problematic.

Of course, the Institute has itself published material, often of a high calibre, and those associated with it have played a not insignificant role in contributing to legal writing over the last fifty years. In recent years, however, there has been a new and dramatic development. Today the Institute is actively involved in the editing and preparation of a large number of legal journals and publications, ranging from corporate law to legislative studies. Two years ago, the Institute established an Information Unit which now has the responsibility of overseeing some fifteen monthly or quarterly publications. *Amicus Curiae*, although our 'flagship', is but just one. This has allowed the Institute to establish and support new and developing areas of research, not only by providing a vehicle for publication, but also in establishing library and reference support. It has also allowed the Institute to increase the number of its academic staff. With the support of publishers such as Sweet and Maxwell, Kluwer and, of course, CCH Editions, a number of new research posts have been created.

The Institute is keen to foster research not only through providing library and related services, but also by creating and supporting integrated programmes of research in areas of the law where its staff have the requisite degree of expertise. Therefore, around individual members of staff, research programmes have been developed which seek to draw in others from outside the Institute, and then provide them with an on-going vehicle for publication of their work. We have also attempted to further support these programmes by establishing related series of public lectures and workshops and even conferences. The Society for Advanced Legal Studies, in so far as it allows us to reach out to those in practice or the administration of justice, has a very important role to play in this strategy.

With the development of electronic publishing the Institute is keen to become actively involved with broadening access to its materials and scholarship. Its Centre for Corporate Law and Practice is in the course of establishing a worldwide database, which will, in the not too distant future, be 'on-line' and encompass the substantive corporate and financial laws of most, if not all, jurisdictions. This will serve as a useful model for other areas of the law. We have absolutely no doubt, however, that without the close working relationship that the Institute and now the Society has been able to develop with legal publishers these developments would not have been feasible either technically or financially.

**Professor Barry Rider**