

# Editorial

Welcome to the winter 2014 issue of Legal Information Management.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

We open this final issue of LIM for 2014 with John Sheridan, Head of Legislation Services at The National Archives, writing on, "Using Data to Understand How the Statute Book Works". His article discusses the 'Big Data for Law' research project which applies the latest analytical techniques to legislation, making it possible to research, interrogate and understand the statute book as a whole system.

## SELECTION OF PAPERS FROM THE BIALL CONFERENCE 2014

As is traditional, this winter edition of Legal information Management features a number of papers (seven in total) that were delivered at the BIALL Annual Study Conference that was held this year at Harrogate in June. The first three papers published here are based on three plenary sessions. The title of the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference was "Data, Data Everywhere" and there was an emphasis on 'big data' issues throughout the meeting.

The keynote speech was delivered by one of the most prominent commentators in the information and library business, Phil Bradley, an internet consultant and expert, and the Immediate Past President of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). The title of his entertaining and illuminating presentation reflected the theme of the conference as a whole and the paper published here in LIM represents some of the issues that he addressed on the opening day of the conference. The paper that follows was given by Dr Andy Williamson (of Democratise) who brought to the stage his expertise in the areas of digital democracy, democratic innovation and the transformation of citizen engagement. He continued the conference theme with his presentation on 'Big data and the implications for government'.

Away from the 'data' theme, Simon Lord of the Financial Times presented the results of a research study that had been commissioned by the FT and the Special Libraries Association to explore the evolving value of information management to organisations. His paper is entitled, "Closing the gap: the five essential attributes of the modern information professional".

The remaining four papers published from the conference refer to several different legal jurisdictions, namely Wales, Ireland and Jersey. The final paper addresses free access to information in African countries. "Law making in a devolved Wales: work in progress" was the title of a fas-

inating paper delivered by John Williams, Professor and Head of the Department of Law and Criminology at Aberystwyth University. He describes how Wales has achieved primary law-making powers but that the process of devolution continues. The paper by John Furlong, Director of Legal Resources at Matheson in Dublin, is a highly informative and up-to-date "Guide for occasional users to the Irish Legal System and Resources". Sue Du Feu and James Lambert offer their joint presentation on the challenges faced by the Jersey Legal Information Board in their paper entitled, "Impacts and effects of publishing legal information in a small jurisdiction: privacy v open justice".

Finally in this selection of papers from the BIALL Conference, Ruth Ward, who is the Head law Librarian at Webber Wentzel in Johannesburg, follows her talk by writing on the subject of, "Building free access to law in Africa: some examples of successful projects". She highlights and illustrates several projects that have delivered, and continue to deliver (sometimes on small budgets), reliable consolidated access to the legislation of their countries.

## CURRENT ISSUES

Under *Current Issues*, and as we close this final issue of LIM for 2014, we celebrate 10 years of GlobalLex, the "Portal dedicated to foreign, comparative and international law research". Mirela Roznovschi, the Editor of GlobalLex and Adjunct Associate Curator at the Hauser Global Law School Program at New York University School of Law, outlines the history and the achievements of the service to date.

## CURRENT AWARENESS

Lastly, readers will note the regular Current Awareness section that has been compiled by Katherine Read and Laura Griffiths at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**David Wills**  
Editor