

12 August 2008

W. ROSS RAY QC

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TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN LEGAL PROFESSION

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO AUSTLII

I am writing to encourage members of the Australian legal profession once again to make contributions to AustLII.

You may recall that in June 2007, the then President, Tim Bugg, wrote to all members of the legal profession to encourage contributions.

That letter was written in the context of a significant unexpected shortfall in research funding for AustLII.

The legal profession responded admirably with contributions to AustLII of almost \$400,000 for the 2007 year.

The Law Council also commenced discussions with AustLII in relation to appropriate business models for its long term financial viability. Those discussions are continuing and I hope that a final position in relation to this issue and the role of the legal profession will be resolved soon.

In the meantime, AustLII has advised me that it has written to members of the profession, who contributed in 2007, asking them to contribute again in 2008. I urge those who contributed previously to do so again.

I also urge those who have not contributed previously to consider doing so this year.

AustLII is an essential tool for many lawyers, which provides centralised access to Commonwealth, State and Territory databases of legislation, caselaw and related legal materials. It also provides access to a wide range of international legal materials. If it was not freely available, many lawyers would have to use highly priced commercial services and pass these costs on to clients.

In addition, some of AustLII's databases are not available through commercial services at all, so it supplements those services which are used by some lawyers.



AustLII is also supported by a number of insurers as an important risk management service for insured solicitors and barristers.

The legal profession accounts for 50% of commercial usage of AustLII.

AustLII also provides access to free legal information for any member of the public. Such access supports the rule of law and should be upheld by the profession.

I ask you to consider making a donation to AustLII. You can do so by going to www.austlii.edu.au or www.lawcouncil.asn.au

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Ross Ray', written in a cursive style.

W. Ross Ray QC