

JUSTICE - ILAG

LEGAL AID NEWSLETTER

No: 17

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R. Smith

Welcome

So, we enter a New Year – one which may prove a hard one for publicly funded legal services in many jurisdictions around the world. This issue contains two articles and the usual round-up of news. One article covers the work of the Legal Resources Centre in South Africa. This is one of the great law centres in the world. The centre is particularly remarkable for having made the transition from working, as it did initially, in the context of apartheid to transforming itself in pace with a developing South Africa. The other is a contribution to domestic English debate on the proposals for significant legal aid cuts reported in the last issue. This is reprinted from its original source, the Law Society's gazette for its members, in order to give those elsewhere a flavour of some of the issues that are being discussed. Any reader who felt that the newsletter was, thereby, according too much attention to a small country on the periphery of Europe whose greatness lay in the past rather than the future would be welcome to make their point in the best way possible: submission of a piece on developments in their own jurisdiction. Readers might note how ideas develop these days. The English ministry of justice proposes a call centre to replace face to face advice. Last issue, we covered Ontario's development of a call centre to supplement face to face advice. Any contributions on the subject of the appropriate contribution of call centres or web-based advice would be particularly interesting.

Roger Smith

And do remember the upcoming conference:

RE-VISIONING LEGAL AID IN AN AGE OF AUSTERITY

ILAG CONFERENCE - HELSINKI, FINLAND:

15 TO 17 JUNE 2011

The English condition: a view into a domestic debate

Roger Smith

In the words of a pop hit of my youth, 'do not let me be misunderstood'. Publicly, we cannot be defeatist about the government's legal aid proposals. But we also need the quiet discussion which all lawyers have, at some time, with a client: 'I understand your cause is noble; your demands just; your argument strong. But, just for a moment, let's acknowledge that you might lose. What might we save from the wreckage?'

In the immediate future, the answer may be, 'Not much'. Justice Ministers Ken Clarke and Jonathon Djanogly do not present themselves as crazed financial neo-cons. But, the capacity for mercy is well above their paygrade, lodging unattainably with the Chancellor and the Prime Minister. So, the package in the consultation paper is pretty likely to be implemented *in toto*.

But, in this robust position may lie an ultimate weakness. The consultation paper was hurriedly knocked up by civil servants under pressure and ministers unfamiliar with office. Intellectually, it is a dog's breakfast. The underlying political brief shines through all too clearly: 'Preserve the scope of criminal and anything that might lead us to be judicially reviewed, at least for the time being. Squeeze remuneration to a level which will lead to complaints but the profession can probably just about live with. Hit clients twice as hard as the lawyers: they won't complain so much. Slash civil scope. Cuts of £450m would be good: anything above £350m acceptable. Any less and we will all be sharing the same railway carriage to Siberia.'

In this process, corners have been cut – not least with history. The Ministry states that: 'The scope of legal aid has expanded beyond its original intentions ...' This is simply not true: legal aid schemes were implemented piecemeal but the original intention of the Legal Aid Act 1949 was comprehensive: to provide 'legal advice for those of slender means and resources so that no one will be financially unable to prosecute a just and reasonable claim or defend a legal right'. By contrast, these proposals are piecemeal but intended to be implemented comprehensively.

In this incoherence lies a future instability. The government is just beginning to face a political narrative which is still largely about job and education cuts. Give it a couple of years and the daily media narrative will be dominated by the impact of the cuts on service users. There will be limitless tales of the deserving poor facing misery. Legal aid will fit into this wider story. Parents of children with catastrophic birth injuries will be getting no assistance. Disabled kids will be deprived of help at special needs assessments. Discontent will peak just before the next election. So, there must be some hope that these proposals are not the last word.

We need to identify issues that we might win either now or in the near future. I make it six possible. Top of the list must be clinical -negligence through the investigative stage – certainly for cases of catastrophic injury. This has the backing of Sir Rupert Jackson, the judge who has just completed a review of costs. Minister Jonathan Djanogly has publicly wobbled on this one at conferences on the reform. Second is education. The consultation paper says that a couple of NGOs can handle the cases but both of them say they can't. Special needs cases are difficult and will get no easier with local authorities under pressure. Some very unattractive publicity will emerge if cuts proceed. Third, it makes absolutely no sense to propose means tests for legal aid which are more stringent than those for minimum income support. The paper assumes that litigants have some form of choice but, actually, defendants don't. In any event, the changes to scope are designed to cut out all but the most deserving. Fourth, it looks doubtful if the idea of snitching client (trust) account income will raise much. The proposal might have more chance if the income went to an independent agency such as the Access to Justice Foundation rather than the Treasury. But, when the money is just to go to the government, clients and lawyers will simply rearrange their affairs. Fifth, the ministry will finally introduce competitive tendering for criminal contracts but we need to win the right of specialist providers, both solicitors and advocates, to act as

'lone wolves'. In a really constitutionally important case like serious terrorism, suspects and the communities from which they come need to get representation that they trust. If they don't, that will feed into a wider narrative of discrimination and victimisation.

Finally, there is the proposed telephone call centre. This is an interesting proposal. Ontario, for example, has established a similar sort of provision which has proved very effective in extending advice (see the last newsletter). The important difference is that this call centre is designed to be exclusive. The implied subtext is that it will cut down on legal aid. Confidence in the extent to which this proposal had been thought through is as not helped by the Ministry rushing out a one page supplement to its consultation paper. This explains that clients will be able to bypass the call centre in an emergency. Any practitioner could tell you how difficult it will be for call centre staff to get callers succinctly to articulate their problem. This proposal will predictably lead to a trail of judicial review of hard pressed staff who did not properly understand the issue with which they were presented.

The legal profession is right to warn publicly of the potentially catastrophic effect on the provision of legal aid in these proposals. But, we also need to look for the victories that may be won along the way. The consultation paper is insubstantial. We are in for a difficult time. The Animals are long since consigned to the past but the fat lady has yet to sing.

This article is substantially reprinted from the Law Society Gazette where it first appeared in the edition of 27th February 2011

South Africa: The Legal Resource Centre (LRC) Revealed

William Kerfoot, Attorney, LRC Cape Town Office

The LRC was established as an entity to engage in free impact litigation for poor, marginalised communities who faced discrimination. While the mission has remained unchanged for over three decades, the processes and partnerships through which the LRC operates have evolved to deal with new challenges.

The first office opened in Johannesburg in 1979 after extensive consultation with the network of advice offices staffed by community activists in the then Transvaal. To identify and litigate cases with maximum impact, a system was organised whereby the advice offices would screen would-be clients and only refer those with appropriate cases to the LRC.

Although the Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth offices did not have as well organised an advice office network to rely on, many NGOs and trade unions, as well as individual advice offices, would identify appropriate cases for those regional offices to take to court.

It is a tribute to the LRC that over the years judges have also referred matters to us. One such reported example is the case of *In re Duma* 1983 (4) SA 466 (N), which dealt with the pernicious section 29 of the Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945 where Africans could be sentenced to labour colonies upon an official's determining them to be "idle and undesirable".

Similarly, Government departments themselves have been a source of clients. In certain cases this has been a strategy by an official to postpone the decision-making process. However many cases are also referred out of a genuine desire for justice to be done.

Over recent years, the LRC has focused a lot of its attention on processing 'walk-ins', individuals who walk into an LRC office seeking help without prior consultation. In most offices the receptionists and paralegals are the first members of staff to deal with the public. Candidate attorneys serving their 2 or 3 years of clerkship before admittance as an attorney may also screen would be clients.

Paralegals have the primary responsibility of explaining to potential clients the role of the LRC and the basis on which we take on matters. Where a case is not appropriate for the LRC they refer the person to an entity that may be able to help, such as another NGO, a law firm, a university Law Clinic, the CCMA, the Department of Labour, or a Chapter 9 institution such as the Human Rights Commission.

The establishment of Pro Bono Units in many large commercial law firms over the past few years has also enabled the LRC to refer many cases to them and also to participate with such law firms in very significant cases. One such recent case was the constitutional challenge to the Communal Land Rights Act in which the LRC successfully collaborated with the Pro Bono Unit of Webber Wentzel and the Law, Race & Gender Project at the University of Cape Town to have the legislation declared unconstitutional.

Where a paralegal is unable to resolve a client's matter through a phone call, letter or referral to another organisation, the matter will either be referred to one of our attorneys or raised directly at a Litigation Committee meeting for assessment as to whether the case should be taken on and what strategy should be used to try to take the matter to a successful conclusion.

This may lead to the involvement of the Constitutional Litigation Unit (CLU) consisting at present of five advocates and one attorney. The CLU is situated in the Johannesburg office and was established in 1996 with support from the Canadian Bar Association and the Canadian International Development Agency to provide an expert resource specifically for significant constitutional litigation. *Alexkor Ltd and Another v Richtersveld Community and Others* 2004 (5) SA 460 (CC) and *National Coalition for Gay & Lesbian Equality and Others v Minister of Home Affairs and Others* 2000 (2) SA 1 (CC), among numerous other examples, all owe an enormous amount to the CLU's input.

Amongst the criteria used by the various offices to assess whether a case should be taken on is the SNIFFI test (S-Skills; N-Need; I-Impact; F-Funding; F-Focus; I-Integration). However, effectively helping the poor and marginalised means that non-impact individual cases are central to the LRC's mission as well – access to justice through the LRC should be available to as many people as possible within the LRC mandate. In addition, proper collation and monitoring of individual cases lead to patterns of exploitation and abuse being detected and challenged.

Looking to the future, the LRC will continue to strengthen its *modus operandi* to fulfil its mission. Owing to funding constraints in more recent years and the consequent reduction in both professional and administrative staff, some potential cases have not been embarked on because of a lack of capacity. In light of these constraints, it is all the more important for the LRC to use and expand its *pro bono* connections with large law firms able to provide both lawyers and resources in time and money consuming matters. The establishment of ProBono.org is therefore welcome. The first director of ProBono.org is Odette Geldenhuys, a former attorney and deputy national director of the LRC. We are confident that such connections and our strong staff, counsel, partners and clients will carry the LRC forward.

News

These reports are largely compiled from news reports on the internet on the basis of a simple search under the words 'legal aid'. Readers must, just as buyers, beware of authenticity. The links worked at the time of writing but some will fail after a period of time.

Much of the legal aid news in the first two months of 2011 has been dominated by the same topic that dominated the news at the end of 2010. The topic, of course, is legal aid cuts. The news articles below make it clear that many jurisdictions such as Canada, England and Wales, Scotland and the United States are facing serious difficulties, however, in some other jurisdictions, namely Australia, China, and Malaysia there have been both positive and interesting developments.

Across Canada, the legal aid systems seem to be struggling and often face criticism. In England and Wales the vast majority of the news concerns the proposals for legal aid reform from the Ministry of Justice and the thousands of responses these proposals. The Law Society for example, responded to the proposals by outlining an alternative way of saving money on the justice system. The proposals have not been met favourably and many fear that the cuts will have a catastrophic effect for access to justice. In Scotland too, the legal cuts are concerning. Furthermore, plans to expand the Public Defence Solicitors' Office in Scotland to help achieve the target for legal aid spending cuts have been criticised. Budget cuts, the consequences of such cuts and funding issues are a growing concern for many parts of the United States. Encouragingly though, a new program allowing retired lawyers to provide free legal services to people who cannot afford it has had its first member appointed by the Tennessee Supreme Court. Additionally, new procedures have been set out by a New York court aiming to ensure all homeowners that face foreclosure will be represented by a lawyer. In Australia, the Federal Government provided \$200,000 to be put towards legal advice and assistance for those affected by the floods in Queensland. There have also been positive developments in China, with figures showing that the funding for legal aid has increased significantly. In Malaysia, the Prime Minister has launched the National Legal Aid Foundation.

It is nice to see that although this is a very turbulent time for many legal aid systems across the world, there have still been some encouraging advancements.

This section is compiled by **Paul Ferrie** of the *University of Strathclyde*.

Australia:

The Federal Government Is To Provide an Extra \$200,000 to Help Flood-Affected Queenslanders Access Legal Information and Advice – Herald Sun – 31/01/11

Read more: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/more-for-flood-legal-aid-for-queensland/story-e6frf7jx-1225997326350>

Bar set to be raised by New Legal Aid Panel – The Sydney Morning Herald – 11/02/11

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/bar-set-to-be-raised-by-new-legal-aid-panel-20110210-1aola.html>

Changes Flagged for SA Legal Aid – ABC News – 11/02/11

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/11/3135990.htm>

Insurance Council Helps Legal Aid – Springfield News – 22/02/11

Read more: <http://springfield-news.whereilive.com.au/news/story/insurance-council-helps-legal-aid/>

Canada:

Legal Aid? Not Much – Edmonton Sun – 18/01/11

Read more: http://www.edmontonsun.com/comment/columnists/mindelle_jacobs/2011/01/18/16932011.html

Access to Justice Becoming a Privilege of the Rich, Judge Warns – The Globe and Mail – 10/02/11

Read more: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/access-to-justice-becoming-a-privilege-of-the-rich-judge-warns/article1903108/>

BC Law Society to Help Struggling Legal Aid System Find Money – The Lawyers Weekly – 11/02/11

Read More: <http://www.lawyersweekly.ca/index.php?section=article&volume=30&number=37&article=1>

Middle Class Denied Justice – Times Colonist – 15/02/11

Read more: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/Middle+class+denied+justice/4284839/story.html>

Legal System Doesn't Work For the Majority: Supreme Court Judge – The Vancouver Sun – 16/02/11

Read more: <http://communities.canada.com/vancouvernews/blogs/justice/archive/2011/02/16/legal-system-doesn-t-work-for-the-majority-supreme-court-judge.aspx>

How to Deal With the High Cost of Canadian Justice – National Post – 18/02/11

Read more: <http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/02/18/how-to-deal-with-the-high-cost-of-canadian-justice/>

Lawyer's Integral in Making Justice Accessible: McLachlin – Law Times – 21/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201102218262/Headline-News/Lawyers-integral-in-making-justice-accessible-McLachlin>

Critics Say Legal Aid Funding Still Falls Short – Calgary Herald – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.calgaryherald.com/Critics+legal+funding+still+falls+short/4345105/story.html#ixzz1FGhi21hL>

The Shame of Legal Aid Ontario – The Lawyers Weekly – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawyersweekly.ca/index.php?section=article&volume=30&number=39&article=3>

China:

China's Legal Aid Funds Surge In 2010 – Global Times – 03/02/11

Read more: <http://china.globaltimes.cn/society/2011-02/619740.html>

213 Counties Will Receive Free Legal Aid – China Daily – 09/02/11

Read more: http://www.china.org.cn/china/2011-02/09/content_21879656.htm

England and Wales:

Scrapping Legal Aid For Medical Cases 'Bad for Justice and Health' – The Telegraph – 31/01/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8273756/Scrapping-Legal-Aid-for-medical-cases-bad-for-justice-and-health.html>

On Legal Aid, The Government's Sums Don't Add Up – Left Foot Forward – 01/02/22

Read more: <http://www.lefftfootforward.org/2011/02/andy-slaughter-legal-aid/>

Shelter Backs Campaign to Protect Legal Aid – Charities Aid Foundation – 01/02/11

Read more: <http://www.cafonline.org/Default.aspx?page=19847>

Legal Aid Is the Last Line of Defence – The Guardian – 02/02/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/02/legal-aid-last-line-defence>

Justice for All – Progress Online – 03/02/11

Read more: <http://www.progressives.org.uk/articles/article.asp?a=7507>

Legal Aid Cuts: Scales of Justice – The Guardian – 04/02/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/04/legal-aid-cuts-disaster>

Removing Legal Aid Would Throw Asylum-Seeking Families into Destitution, Warns The Children's Society – Children & Young People Now – 04/02/11

Read more: <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/ByDiscipline/Social-Care/1053315/Removing-legal-aid-throw-asylum-seeking-families-destitution-warns-Childrens-Society/>

Justice Redefined – Progress Online – 10/02/11

Read more: <http://www.progressives.org.uk/columns/column.asp?c=605>

Law Society Sounds Off On Legal Aid Cuts – Law Careers.Net – 11/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawcareers.net/Information/News/Detail.aspx?r=2533>

Legal aid cuts and the Opposition – Legal Action Group – 12/02/11

Read more: <http://legalactiongroupnews.blogspot.com/2011/02/legal-aid-cuts-and-opposition.html>

'Devastating Impact' Of Legal Aid Cuts Plan – BBC News – 14/02/11

Read more: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-12430601>

Legal Aid Cuts 'Crude and Brutal' – UK Press Association – 14/02/11

Read more:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ukpress/article/ALegM5hyQADLHChCizhuCg09VOhiplhhUQ?docId=N0707821297566792284A>

On Valentine's Day, Ken Clarke Needs To Know That Legal Aid Is Loved – The Guardian – 14/02/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/feb/14/ken-clarke-legal-aid>

Resolution and Bar Council Warn Of Costs to Taxpayers of Legal Aid Changes – Family Law Week – 14/02/11

Read more: <http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Legal+services%2C+down+and+nearly+out&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-GB:official&client=firefox-a#sclient=psy&hl=en&client=firefox-a&hs=wFm&rls=org.mozilla:en-GB%3Aofficial&tbs=nws:1&q=response+to+ministry+of+justice+reofrm+of+legl+aid&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=&pbx=1&fp=bc1bb928a40fc21c>

Lord Justice Jackson's Proposed Reforms of Litigation Costs Ignited a Fierce Debate – The Guardian – 16/02/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/feb/16/jackson-litigation-costs-reform>

Thousands Respond To Ministry Of Justice Legal Aid Consultation – Law Society Gazette – 16/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/thousands-respond-ministry-justice-legal-aid-consultation>

Law Society Sets Out £394m Justice System Savings – Law Society Gazette – 17/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/law-society-sets-out-394m-justice-system-savings>

Access to Justice 2.0 – UK Human Rights Blog – 18/02/11

Read more: <http://ukhumanrightsblog.com/2011/02/18/access-to-justice-2-0/>

Beware the Poor Lawyer: The Legal Aid Reform Responses – UK Human Rights Blog – 18/02/11

Read more: <http://ukhumanrightsblog.com/2011/02/18/beware-the-poor-lawyer-the-legal-aid-reform-responses/>

Cuts To Put Half of Legal Aid Firms at Risk of Closure – Law Society Gazette – 24/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/cuts-put-half-legal-aid-firms-risk-closure>

Experts Hit Out At 'Unfair Reforms' – The Morning Star Online – 24/02/11

Read more: <http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/index.php/news/content/view/full/101538>

Legal Aid Cuts Will Cost More in Long Run, Say Judges – The Guardian – 24/02/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/feb/24/legal-aid-cuts-cost-judges>

Ministers Accused Of Pushing Mediation to Hide Legal Aid Cuts - The Telegraph – 24/01/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8343096/Ministers-accused-of-pushing-mediation-to-hide-legal-aid-cuts.html>

Q&A: Legal Aid – The Telegraph – 24/02/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8346198/QandA-Legal-Aid.html>

Cutting Legal Aid Will Undermine Whole Family Law System – The Telegraph – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/lawreports/8346866/Cutting-legal-aid-will-undermine-whole-family-law-system.html>

Mediation Mandatory for Divorcing Couples – Law Careers.Net – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawcareers.net/Information/News/Detail.aspx?r=2542>

Could You Defend Yourself In Court? – BBC News Magazine – 28/02/11

Read more: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-12578577>

Judges Slam Legal Aid Cuts and Lawyers Who Bring 'Unmeritorious' Claims – Law Society Gazette – 28/02/11

Read more: <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/judges-slam-legal-aid-cuts-and-lawyers-who-bring-unmeritorious-claims>

Judiciary Responds To Government's Legal Aid Proposals – Family Law Week – 28/02/11

Read more: <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed80420>

Gambia:

Report On Legal Aid Initiatives Validated – Foroyaa Online – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.foroyaa.gm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=6248>

India:

India, Indonesia Ink Pacts on Legal Aid, Extradition – Indian Express – 26/01/11

Read more: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/India--Indonesia-ink-pacts-on-legal-aid--extradition/742265>

Court Asks Legal Aid Authority to Make Guidelines on Admission – IBN Live – 28/01/11

Read more: <http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/court-asks-legal-aid-authority-to-make-guidelines-on-admission/555364.html>

UILS Students to Open Legal Aid Cell - The Times of India – 04/02/11

Read more: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/UILS-students-to-open-legal-aid-cell/articleshow/7421535.cms>

Make Justice Affordable For Poor: President – IBN Live – 06/02/11

Read more: <http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/make-justice-affordable-for-poor-president/567739.html>

Legal Aid for Persons in Custody – The Times of India – 21/02/11

Read more: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/Legal-aid-for-persons-in-custody/articleshow/7536413.cms>

Malawi:

Witchcraft Legal Aid in Africa – The New York Times – 17/02/11

Read more: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/18/opinion/18iht-edmgbako18.html>

Malaysia:

Bar Council: Lack of Legal Representation Troubling – The Star Online – 19/01/11

Read more: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/1/19/nation/7827701&sec=nation>

Even Lawyers Find the Steep Increase in Fees Over the Top – The Malay Mail – 18/02/11

Read more: <http://www.mmail.com.my/content/64194-even-lawyers-find-steep-increase-fees-over-top>

PM Launches National Legal Aid Foundation – Bernama - Malaysian National News Agency – 25/02/11

Read more: <http://www.bernama.com.my/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=566450>

Easier Access To Legal Aid for Low-Income Earners – The Star Online – 26/02/11

Read more: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/2/26/nation/8146194&sec=nation>

Legal Aid Centres Lack Funding – Malaysia Sun – 27/02/11

Read more: <http://story.malaysiasun.com/index.php/ct/9/cid/48cba686fe041718/id/43329460/ht/Legal-aid-centres-lack-funding/>

UPKO Wants Legal Aid Foundation Services Extended To Native Court in Sabah – The Malay Mail – 27/02/11

Read more: <http://www.mmail.com.my/content/64991-upko-wants-legal-aid-foundation-services-extended-native-court-sabah>

The Netherlands:

Legal Aid Lawyers Furious At Halving Of Fee – Dutch News.nl – 09/02/11

Read more: http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2011/02/legal_aid_lawyers_furious_at_h.php

New Zealand:

Legal Aid Clients Taking Right-To-Choose Case to Court – TV NZ – 27/01/11

Read more: <http://tvnz.co.nz/national-news/legal-aid-clients-taking-right-choose-case-court-4008687>

Labour Backs Legal Aid Reform – News Talk ZB – 16/02/11

Read more: <http://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/newsdetail1.asp?storyID=190921>

Legal Aid Changes Inefficient – Nelson Mail – 16/02/11

Read more: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/4664118/Legal-aid-changes-inefficient>

Legal Aid Changes on the Way – Power – New Zealand Herald – 21/02/11

Read more: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10707819

Nigeria:

Judges Train on Integrating Human Rights – All Africa – 08/02/11

Read more: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201102080332.html>

Northern Ireland:

Justice System 'Ready' To Change – Belfast Telegraph – 01/02/11

Read more: <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/justice-system-ready-to-change-15070366.html>

Republic of Ireland:

Lawyers Received €54.2m Through Criminal Legal Aid Scheme – The Irish Times – 29/01/11

Read more: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2011/0129/1224288527655.html>

Judge Calls for Legal Aid Reform – The Irish Times – 09/02/11

Read more: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2011/0209/1224289345206.html>

Scotland:

Legal Aid Red Tape 'Causing Court Delays' – Herald Scotland – 07/01/11

Read more: <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/crime-courts/legal-aid-red-tape-causing-court-delays-1.1078463>

Legal Aid Cuts Could Breach Human Rights, Warn Lawyers – The Scotsman – 18/01/11

Read more: <http://www.scotsman.com/news/Legal-aid-cuts-could-breach.6693778.jp>

Build Justice System Round Users, Says Advisory Group – The Journal Online – 19/01/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1009210.aspx>

Lawyers' Fear Legal Aid Cuts Will Force Them Out Of Business – Daily Record – 30/01/11

Read more: <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/2011/01/30/lawyers-fear-legal-aid-cuts-will-force-them-out-of-business-86908-22886365/>

GBA Attacks PDSO Duty Scheme Expansion – The Journal Online – 03/02/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1009269.aspx>

Justice Must Be Fair In Plan To Reduce Legal Aid Costs – Herald Scotland (registration required) – 03/02/11

Read more: <http://www.heraldscotland.com/comment/herald-view/justice-must-be-fair-in-plan-to-reduce-legal-aid-costs-1.1083242>

Lawyers' Fury at New Public Defender Plan – Herald Scotland – 03/02/11

Read more: <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/lawyers-fury-at-new-public-defender-plan-1.1083211?localLinksEnabled=false>

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Final Note

This newsletter has been compiled by **Roger Smith** of **JUSTICE** in London, UK. If you would like to be taken off the circulation list, add someone or contribute some content, please contact Roger by emailing rsmith@justice.org.uk.