AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION LAW ASSOCIATION (ANZELA) NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER 2024

Good evening, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Tasmania and to Government House to this reception for your 2024 Australia and New Zealand Education Law Conference.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea and waters.

May I extend a special welcome to all the delegates from New Zealand and, from across the Bass Strait.

I wish you all a stimulating, productive and enjoyable ANZELA Conference focusing on '… sharing of understanding and knowledge of education law …".

You certainly have a very busy programme of presentations over the next two days, with 27 sessions in your thought-provoking theme, "Education Law: Avoid extinction, learn from the past, plan for the future". Your theme echoes philosopher George Santayana's aphorism that, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it".

I am sure that, in all your sessions, you will be learning from the past and aiming to plan for your future, to name a few sessions: on student discipline; resolving disputes through ADR; restorative practices in Aotearoa across the Tasman; and flexibility in the education workforce.

I see also that you are aiming to plan for your future with three sessions devoted to artificial intelligence in the educational context. Whether you believe AI is a

harmless tool which can level the playing field for students, or you believe that AI is a tool that inhibits learning and critical thinking, it is here to stay and is developing rapidly. It is changing how we all learn, study and work. We have AI, from virtual tutors that provide feedback and assistance to students, to diagnostic AI that helps medical professionals.[1]

So, we need to learn how to use, adapt to and ethically manage these tools.

Educators will need to understand the opportunities of AI to assist teaching and learning, but also to manage the risk of potential consequences, including the potential for errors, the misuse of confidential information, or the use of AI for inappropriate purposes, such as to undermine the integrity of student assessments.[2]

An American Bar Association survey of 29 law schools in early 2024 highlights "the growing integration of AI in legal education,"[3] to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities AI presents. These law schools are offering classes dedicated to AI or clinics where students can learn to use AI tools effectively. Institutions are also adapting their academic integrity policies in response to generative AI.[4]

On this topic of AI, I have just read that a law firm in Sydney, Landers and Rogers, is holding a mock trial this month. This involves a simple legal matter between a randomly selected audience member, represented by a lawyer, and a second randomly selected audience member, representing themself using a legal AI tool called NextLaw (assisted by a technology lawyer). A University of Technology

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[1] https://www.pc.gov.au/media-speeches/articles/ai-regulation accessed 25/9.24

[2] https://www.education.gov.au/schooling/announcements/australian-framework-generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-schools

[3] https://www.thelawyermag.com/au/news/general/american-bar-association-survey-highlights-growing-integration-of-ai-in-legal-education/496461

[4] Ibid.

Sydney law professor will act as the judge.[5] It will be interesting to see how the AI performs against a well-trained lawyer.

As a former judge, there are no plans for AI judges yet, that I am aware of!

I am sure your three sessions about AI will assist you all to gain some understanding about the use of AI in legal education, how we can manage it, and its future implications in the education context.

May I again welcome you all here to Government House and I wish you all a very productive and successful ANZELA conference.

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[5] https://www.thelawyermag.com/au/practice-areas/tmt-telecoms-media-technology/lander-rogers-to-hold-mock-trial-between-human-and-ai-at-sxsw-sydney/507136