

Pizer's Annotated VCAT Act

Emrys Nekvapil, 6th edn, Thomson Reuters, 2017, pb \$229

I vividly recall the farewell speech given by the author of this book, Emrys Nekvapil, on the occasion of his departure from King & Wood Mallesons. His farewell speech was a perambulation around questions of administrative law and statutory interpretation. He was appropriately gifted by friends at the firm with a large tome.

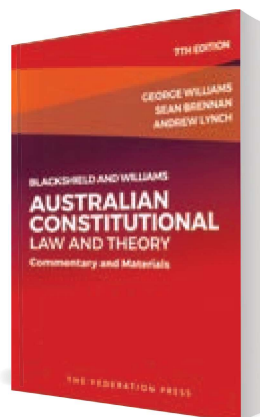
It warmed the cockles of my heart to see my professional friend and colleague follow in the steps of Jason Pizer as the author of this highly regarded volume on the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), now in its sixth edition. In addition to the usual helpful commentary on the machinery of VCAT, new parts of the text authored by Nekvapil include:

- the impact of cases that consider whether VCAT may exercise the judicial power of the Commonwealth
- whether VCAT may determine a proceeding between residents of two states.

These and other additions extend the text beyond a go to guide for members of and advocates before VCAT. It is now, more than ever, an insightful discourse on legal developments. The author uses plain language, making it accessible to the non-lawyer litigant in person (if they can lift it, at 1281 pages).

Having disclosed my conflict of interest, I suggest you purchase a copy of this book for your own library and dive into it on an as needed basis. It offers a practical and deep dive into the issues which are frequently raised at VCAT.

Eliza M Bergin, Anthony Mason Chambers



Blackshield and Williams Australian Constitutional Law and Theory: Commentary and Materials

George Williams, Sean Brennan & Andrew Lynch, 7th edn, Federation Press, 2018, pb \$155

Australian lawyers are blessed with high-quality case books on constitutional law. While each of these books has its own merits, *Blackshield and Williams* is probably the best known in the field. It provides a comprehensive and reliable starting point for study or research in Australian constitutional law (although one hesitates to describe a book of more than 1500 pages as a "starting point").

This edition contains a new chapter on statutory interpretation and its relevance to constitutional law. There is also new material on proportionality, constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples and decision-making in the High Court. The authors have also reorganised their treatment of the implied freedom of political communication. As would be expected, the book has been updated to cover all recent significant constitutional cases up to December 2017. All of these features are very useful as a reminder of constitutional developments in the past few years.

Based on recent experience, it seems likely that we will see significant developments in constitutional law in the near future. It will be interesting to see when the next edition of this book will be released. I suspect that the authors will face a challenging task in producing it.

This book deserves its reputation as a high quality overview of Australian constitutional law. I can recommend it to students, teachers and professionals alike.

Daniel Lovric, Commonwealth Office of Parliamentary Counsel

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