

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **International Securities Regulation: Pacific Rim,**

**Gordon R Walker** (ed) (2 vols),

Oceana Publications Inc, New York (1996) (US \$170 per annum)

In 1992 Robert Rosen, an American attorney, first introduced a multi-volume set on *International Securities Regulation*. The work followed a set structure for each of the jurisdictions which it covered. Each country chapter, in Booklet One, described the general legal system and specific securities regulations. In-depth discussion of the case law was avoided, but sufficient detail was provided to give comprehensive and meaningful coverage of case law developments. Booklet Two reproduced each country's securities and related legislation.

Under the general editorship of Gordon Walker, this work now has a Pacific Rim addition. The same format of Booklets One and Two has been adopted to provide uniformity with the approach taken in the first publication of *International Securities Regulation*. The Pacific Rim addition brings together commentary and legislation from Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand. There is, therefore, wide coverage of countries with both developed and developing capital markets.

There are a number of reasons why a comparative securities regulation work of this kind is important in the New Zealand setting. Following the de-regulation of New Zealand's financial sectors in 1984-85, there has been a substantial inflow and outflow of capital. New Zealand investors are able to diversify their investments to reflect their risk and return preferences. Conversely, borrowers may access overseas investors or markets for capital which is either not available domestically or is available overseas on preferred terms and conditions. The internet also now provides the opportunity to offer securities, to advise on securities and to trade in securities. Thus, with de-regulation and the growth in information technology there is a new age of capital mobility and a greater need for awareness of international securities laws.

Traditionally, reference made in New Zealand to foreign securities regimes has been limited to countries such as Australia, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom: see, for example, *Report of the Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into the Sharemarket* (1989) and New Zealand Law Commission Reports 9 (1989) and 16 (1990). Understandably, given the increasing significance of the Pacific Rim to New Zealand trade, some attention is switching to the securities law of these jurisdictions.

It is in this context that this work provides a unique resource. *International Securities Regulation: Pacific Rim* is the only work which brings together a comprehensive comparative review of the securities laws of this region. It is also the only ready source of comparative primary material, bringing together in English the legislation for all of the jurisdictions mentioned above. This is

significant as an English translation of the legislation of some of these jurisdictions, such as Korea, the People's Republic of China and Malaysia, is not otherwise available.

It follows that this publication will be of real value to practitioners, academics and students. While the work does not provide in-depth case analysis of the substantive law (except for New Zealand), it does provide a quick, but nonetheless comprehensive, overview of the securities laws of each country in the region. The value of this resource is further enhanced by regular updates. In 1999 there were three such updates.

Gordon Walker is to be congratulated for his initiative and energy in bringing together a strong team of authors. It is no easy task to co-ordinate a work of this kind and Walker has succeeded in attracting a range of authors with considerable standing in each jurisdiction.

As the volumes of this work are loose leaf, there is the opportunity to update and improve the content of this work. There is no doubt also the temptation for authors to expand upon the detail of their analysis of the substantive law. This would be generally desirable and imperative in the case of new developments, such as the regulation of electronic aspects of the securities markets. However, such expansion needs to be done within clearly managed limits. One of the virtues of the work is its succinct overview of each jurisdiction, and this should not be sacrificed.

The cost of purchasing and maintaining this work is significant. However, *International Securities Regulation: Pacific Rim* is a unique resource which is, and will increasingly become, invaluable for those advising and researching into securities regulations in the region.

**Mark Berry**  
**Deputy Chairman**  
**Commerce Commission**