

NZLII 2010 in review

2010 was a year of amazing growth for NZLII – both in number of decisions and number of databases.

Funding

The support of the New Zealand Law Foundation was extremely valuable during 2010. The New Zealand Accident Compensation project was completed with all available Accident Compensation District Court decisions back to 2001 loaded. Within the provided funding all the decisions post 2000 of the New Zealand Accident Compensation Appeal Authority were also loaded to their own database. The increase in use of this database has justified the investment the Law Foundation put into this project. The Environment Court project, whereupon all available decisions of the New Zealand Environment Court from September 1996 will be made freely available was commenced at the end of 2010 with the support of the New Zealand Law Foundation.

New databases

The most exciting new database in 2010 was the New Zealand Acts as Enacted database. It sparked a lot of interest and new visitors to NZLII. The collection of New Zealand legislative material should soon be complete with the provision by the University of Auckland of the 1908 Consolidation. This will mark an impressive achievement.

The Parliamentary Bills database was another new database in the Legislation sub-directory.

Eleven new case databases were added to the NZLII collection during 2010. They were the Liquor Licencing Authority, Environment Court, Weathertight Homes, Weathertight Homes Eligibility, Lawyers and Conveyancers Disciplinary Tribunal, Disputes Tribunal, Secondhand Dealers, Complaints Review Tribunal, Real Estate Agents Disciplinary Tribunal, Film and Literature Board of Review and the Mental Health Review Tribunal. Of those new databases, several are in the top 10 case law databases in terms of access in December 2010 – the Environment Court coming in at number 7, the Liquor Licencing Authority at number 8 and the Disputes Tribunal being the 10th most accessed case law database in December 2010.

The other noticeable event in regards to the Case law databases in 2010 was the massive increase in use in the Accident Compensation Cases (District Court) database once the ACC stopped free public access. This changeover in ACC policy occurred late September, coinciding with the launch of the NZ Acts and Enacted database and the Melbourne conference of the Australian and New Zealand Law Librarians (which provided a great opportunity to publicise NZLII).

The top ten case law databases in terms of number of decisions by the end of 2010 were:

1. New Zealand High Court (NZHC)
2. New Zealand Court of Appeal (NZCA)
3. Liquor Licencing Authority (NZLLA)
4. Accident Compensation Cases – NZACC
5. Employment Relations Authority – NZERA

6. Broadcasting Standards Authority – NZBSA
7. New Zealand Environment Court – NZEnvC
8. Motor Vehicle Dealers Tribunal – NZMVDT
9. Social Security Appeal Authority – NZSSAA
10. IPONZ Patent decisions – NZIPOPAT

The top ten case databases in terms of number of hits for the whole of 2010 were

1. New Zealand High Court
2. New Zealand Court of Appeal
3. New Zealand Supreme Court (NZSC)
4. Accident Compensation Cases
5. Human Rights Review Tribunal (NZHRRT)
6. Liquor Licensing Authority
7. IPONZ- Trade Marks (NZIPOTM)
8. New Zealand Employment Court (NZEmpC)
9. Deportation Review Tribunal (NZDRT)
10. Employment Relations Authority.

At 1 January 2010 there were 23657 individual decisions in the case law databases. By 31 December 2010 that number had increased by 38% to 38558, an increase of 14901 decisions. 2011 should also be a year of impressive growth, especially given the 4000 Environment Court decisions to be loaded.

Databases in the works for 2011

Several new databases will be going live in the first few weeks of 2011 – including the 3 former Ministry of Immigration Tribunals that have been replaced by the new Immigration and Protection Tribunal (the Refugee Status Appeals Authority, the Removal Review Authority and the Residence Review Board). The replacement tribunal will have its decisions hosted by NZLII. Given the number of decisions per year of the Authorities being replaced this could be a very active Tribunal.

Journal Databases

The New Zealand Yearbook of International Law was added to the journal collection in 2010. All the back issues of the Otago Law Review were added to the previous small Otago Law Review database. The Canterbury Law Review database showed that when there is significant number of journal articles present, usage is impressive. The number of hits on the Review is almost 4 times that of the Victoria University of Wellington Law Review – the second most accessed journal.)

Conferences

The joint Australian and New Zealand Law Librarian conference in Melbourne provided an opportunity to increase awareness of the services that NZLII provides as well as our support base.

Our grateful thanks go to AustLII and to the volunteers (particularly court staff, Tribunals Unit staff, our colleagues at the Canterbury Law Library and members of the New Zealand Law Librarians' Association) who have all helped us load decisions or have contributed citations.