

## **Collection and Resources Development Policy**

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### **Law**

Law includes common law, statute law and subordinate legislation. Common law being made by judges and the courts in the form of collections of case law, summaries of legal precedent used by judges and commentary on specific aspects of the law. Statute law consisting of collections of legislation and rules produced by parliaments and government bodies.

#### **Collection overview**

The collection is primarily for those who do not have access to comprehensive law collections. Generally, collecting is at an intermediate level with significant holdings in research areas. The Library collects comprehensively for all areas of Victorian law and at a research level for Australia.

Increasingly primary resources of law reports and legislation are published on the internet. While commentary on Australian and Victorian law, including textbooks and plain language interpretation on the law, is more likely to be published in print and is selected at an advanced level.

Emphasis is given to social aspects of law and topics of public debate and interest, such as law reform; works popularising law, including biography and history; and works useful to non-professionals, including undergraduate texts, commentary and case law. This can include specific lawyer's tools for self-litigation or do-it-yourself law.

#### **Collection strengths**

##### **Legislation**

Victorian and Commonwealth legislation, including subordinate legislation, bills and complementary government publications, contribute to a comprehensive historical and current research collection. In general, most legislation for Australia is now available in electronic format. Loose-leaf services and electronic resources that provide commentary on specific Victorian and Australian legislation are collected to augment this research collection.

A substantial collection of older legislation is held for Commonwealth countries; current legislation is now accessed electronically for all overseas countries.

##### **Law reports**

The principal general law reports for all Australian jurisdictions and a collection of specialist Australian law reports are held, notably for family, administrative and criminal law. Major series of law reports in hard copy or via the internet are collected for the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the United States, Canada and international courts.

The Library has strong collections relating to the individual and social policy areas in Victorian and Australian law – collecting is at an intermediate level or higher. These include industrial and labour law, environmental and planning law, social security law and occupational health and safety law which complements collecting in labour economics. A similar level of collecting occurs for criminal law material, including rights of the accused, police and criminal procedure, and for civil law, especially in relation to family law, planning, property, negligence and torts. For administrative law such as immigration and citizenship, human rights, equal opportunity, local government and freedom of information, collecting is again focused on Victorian and Australian law.

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## **Company and commercial law**

Company and commercial law is maintained at a research level, while collecting for taxation law is aimed at the lay person seeking basic information.

## **Civil procedure and courts**

The focus is on Victorian and federal courts and court procedures collected for the non-professional and self-litigant.

## **International law**

A very substantial collection of texts of treaties and agreements is held, building on historical strengths. Publications from the United Nations, the European Communities and other international organisations are collected at an advanced level, along with agreements and parliamentary documents supporting treaties, conventions and legislation, and guides and commentaries. Collecting has expanded to include commentaries on international law and related issues including human rights, world court and war crimes.

## **Constitutional law**

Significant historical material on the Australian constitution and the constitutions of other countries has been collected. Currently the emphasis is on collecting the material on the Australian constitution and federalism systems.

## **Laws of other countries**

Collecting is generally at a basic information level, with only those countries closely linked to Australia emphasised.

## **Material not generally collected**

- local council by-laws
- highly specialised law reports aimed at a very narrow area of law
- specialist legal periodicals.