Resource Reviews: Australian Materials on Westlaw & Lexis

Part of series of reviews prepared by the Electronic Research Interest Group

Erin Gow
This sub-series of Resource Reviews highlights foreign law materials included in standard academic subscriptions to Westlaw Edge and Lexis+.

HOW WELL-KNOWN IS THE SOURCE?
As previously discussed (see Feb. 2021 FCIL Newsletter), the international materials on Lexis+ and Westlaw Edge are frequently overlooked. Law librarians, researchers, and others who are familiar with these databases beyond the primary landing page, are most likely to be aware that both databases offer some materials from Australia.

HOW ACCESSIBLE IS IT?
Foreign and international materials are not included in the default search on either Lexis+ or Westlaw Edge, so searchers need to know where to look for these collections. Both databases include Australia in the list of jurisdictions on the front page of their International tabs, however, which makes it easy to access these materials if you know where to look.

HOW AUTHORITATIVE IS IT?
Westlaw Edge provides two authorized series of Australian law reports: the Commonwealth Law Reports, and the Federal Court Reports; while Lexis+ provides selected authorized Australian Law Reports and state series such as the Queensland Reports.

The authorized version of Australian legislation is freely available from the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, and Westlaw Edge does not provide Australian legislation at all. Lexis+ integrates Australian legislation from LawNow, however.

HOW COMPREHENSIVE IS IT, IN TERMS OF ITS CONTENTS?
Overall Lexis+ provides more thorough coverage of Australian legislation and more secondary sources than Westlaw Edge offers. Both databases include some varied resources such as case law.

A selection of case law published in law reports and unreported cases from all states, territories, and from federal courts is available in both Leixs+ and Westlaw Edge. The law reports included in each database vary slightly, with Lexis+ providing additional series such as Family Law Reports and Administrative Law Decisions, while Westlaw Edge offers Tax Reports. Searchers may need to use both databases in order to find comprehensive coverage of case law, but the cumulative coverage is strong.

Beyond case law, Lexit+ provides significantly more coverage, with Australian federal, state, and territory legislation from LawNow, which includes both current and some historic laws. Westlaw Edge includes a few journals and law reviews, but only one title that is not available in Lexit+. The journal and law review selection in Lexis+ is slightly wider, and makes this the better database for both legislative and secondary research.

HOW EASY-TO-USE (USER-FRIENDLY) IS IT?
Both databases allow American searchers to look for materials in a platform that they are already familiar with, which may ease

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From the Chair

Marcelo Rodriguez

Dear Colleagues,

The AALL Annual Meeting in Denver will take place in person in July 2022 and the FCIL-SIS will participate enthusiastically. As the new chair, I’m looking forward to connecting with many of you, reconnecting with others and meeting new members. After two years in a completely virtual setting, we are eager to interact with each other in person. However, before the annual meeting, we will still have several exciting virtual programs and I encourage all members to continue the conversation through webinars, projects and collaborations throughout the year.

We are partnering with the Law Library of Congress to host a webinar on June 16 at 2pm (EDT) called “The Most Improbable War: Legal Transformations in Ukraine and Russia Before and During the Invasion”. Please attend and share with everyone interested. In preparation for the Annual Meeting, I have encouraged all our groups to meet online beforehand. So far, we have the African Law Interest Group confirmed with a webinar and guest speaker for Wednesday June 29th. Once I hear from others, I will inform the entire SIS.

In Denver, our SIS will host the following events:

- **How to Research Brazilian Law and Government Information**
  - Sunday, July 17 1:30-2:30pm CCC 403-404

- **Kyoto, Paris, COP26: International Climate Change Mechanisms**
  - Sunday, July 17 3:00-4:00pm CCC 403-404

- **Teaching FCIL IG roundtable**
  - Monday, July 18 12:15-1:15 pm

- **FCIL-SIS Foreign, Comparative and International Law Business Meeting**
  - Monday, July 18 5:30-7:00 pm

- **International Attendees Joint Reception (FCIL/ IALL/AALL)**
  - Monday, July 18 7:00-9:00 pm

I hope to see you all attending and supporting these events and our colleagues. These events reflect the importance of promoting and engaging with pressing foreign and international conversations in our profession.

As every year, during our business meeting we will have the tremendous opportunity to celebrate the achievements and accomplishments of our amazing members.

**2022 FCIL-SIS AWARDS**

**The Daniel L. Wade FCIL-SIS Outstanding Service Award**

Yemisi Dina, Chief Law Librarian, York University, Osgoode Hall Law School

**The Thomas H. Reynolds & Arturo A. Flores FCIL-SIS Publications Award**

Alex Zhang, Associate Dean of Information Services and Director of the J. Michael Goodson Law Library, Duke University School of Law

Katherine Siler, Head of Reference Services, Stanford Law School, Robert Crown Law Library

Global Animal Law Research

Carolina Academic Press

**The Spirit of the FCIL-SIS Award**

Meredith Capps, Foreign and International Law Librarian/Lecturer in Law, Vanderbilt University Law School

David Isom, Faculty Services Librarian, University of San Diego School of Law

Janet Kearney, Foreign & International Law Librarian, Fordham University School of Law

**The Blog Post of the Year Award**

From the Reference Desk Series
Jonathan Pratter, Foreign and International Law Librarian, Tarlton Law Library, University of Texas at Austin

**The Newsletter Article of the Year Award**

Work-in-Progress: A Research Framework in FCIL Teaching?
Janet Kearney, Foreign & International Law Librarian, Fordham University School of Law
From the Chair continued from page 2

The Interest Group/Committee Project of the Year Award

Canon Law 101 and Get Refusal & Domestic Violence in the Jewish Community  
Customary and Religious Law Interest Group (CARLIG)

The Executive Committee Special Award for Excellence

FCIL –SIS Diversity Committee Task Force:

Errol A. Adams, Reference & Scholarly Services Librarian, Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University

Dennis C. Prieto, Reference Librarian, Rutgers University Law School Library

Aamir Abdullah, Instructional Services & Research Librarian, University of Colorado Law School’s William A. Wise Law Library

Melissa Abernathy, Head of Reference/Foreign & International Specialist, University of San Diego School of Law

Erin Gow, Associate Professor of Legal Bibliography, University of Louisville Law Library

the transition to working with foreign materials, although it is important to remember that these materials are not included in the general search on either database.

HOW USEFUL IS IT IN TERMS OF ITS ABILITY TO ANSWER BOTH COMMON AND RARE (DIFFICULT-TO-FIND) QUESTIONS?

Both databases allow searchers to quickly locate legal resources from Australia in platforms familiar to the American searcher. Searchers do not have to pay for, or learn to use, a bespoke database to access these foreign materials. Lexis+ in particular is an excellent starting place when answering common Australian legal research questions, and Westlaw Edge provides additional case law in authorized law reports.

FCIL Newsletter

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Our SIS is fortunate to include in its ranks exceptionally talented and enthusiastic writers. With this feature, we are happy to spread the word of their recent publications.

**SPECTRUM**

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*International Journal of Legal Information*

**Globalex**
- Marylin Johnson Raisch, *UPDATE: Transnational and Comparative Family Law: Harmonization and Implementation*

**BOOK CHAPTERS**

**BOOK REVIEWS**
*Law Library Journal*

**BLOG POSTS**
*RIPS Law Librarian Blog*
- Peter A. Hook, *Data About the Profession: Peak Library Expenditures*
- Peter A. Hook, *Follow the Trend: Invest in Professionals*

*IALL Blog*
- Heather Casey, *Law and Literature*

*DipLawMatic Dialogues*
- Julienne E. Grant, Joan Policastro, & Sue Silverman, *Related Organizations Series: Indigenous Peoples Law*
- Lucie Olejnikova, *GlobaLex March/April 2022 Issue is Live*
- Jonathan Pratter, *From the Reference Desk: Are Legal Systems Converging?*
- Jonathan Pratter, *From the Reference Desk: Reflections on 35 Years as an FCIL Librarian*
- Marcelo Rodriguez, *Through the FCIL Lens: Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burkina Faso, Honduras and Europe*
- Marcelo Rodriguez, *Through the FCIL Lens: Peru, Tanzania, Afghanistan, South Korea and Solomon Islands*
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**Member Publications**

Have you recently published an article or blog post? We would love to highlight it in our Recent Member Publications.

Send your information to Jingwei Zhang for the next issue.