

DISCIPLINARY HEARING
REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Maurice Eugene Frichot pleaded guilty to 92 counts of illegal conduct before the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal on 15 March 2001. The Reference before the Tribunal arose from the practitioner's conviction on each of these counts and his subsequent sentencing to a term of imprisonment for 3½ years with eligibility for parole on 24 November 2000 before the District Court in Perth.

The facts found by the Tribunal disclosed in the evidence before it, led to a finding that the practitioner was guilty of the illegal conduct as alleged between on or about 18 December 1997 and on or about 27 March 2000. In essence, the practitioner was a member of the Board of Australian Paralympic Committee responsible for raising funds to assist competitors in the Paralympic games. He was the sole signatory to a trust account established by the Committee for the holding of the funds collected. Over a period between December 1997 and March 2000, the practitioner stole amounts on 92 occasions totalling \$291,422.75. These sums stolen were used to pay personal expenses and to subsidise his gambling addiction. These thefts represented a gross breach of trust committed by a solicitor of apparent high standing in the community. This conduct breaches the essence of the practice of this profession.

Notwithstanding the practitioner's previous unimpeachable record, the Tribunal finds that the practitioner is not a fit and proper person to practise and it determined to make and transmit a Report to this Honourable Court with a view to the practitioner being struck off the Roll or otherwise dealt with as the Court may think fit. It ordered that the practitioner who is presently in custody, pay the costs incurred by

the Legal Practitioners Complaints Committee which it fixed at \$750.00.
It also ordered application of this Report pursuant to Section 31C(5).

Mrs AJ Thompson
Registrar
Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal
March 2001