

# Editorial

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## Editorial Page Content

The editors of the BLR would like to invite readers to submit short (approximately 500-600 words) comments for the Editorial page. We feel that some of our readers would be prepared to write a short article on a matter of topical interest to business lawyers when they are not inclined to prepare a longer, more analytical article.

If this interests you, please telephone the editor, Susan Nicholas on 01737 360090 before committing pen to paper to discuss the subject matter and timing.

## Dispute Resolution

The Lord Chancellor's Department has announced a pilot mediation scheme in London. This will be run at Central London County Court and is due to start in mid-May.

The scheme is part of an initiative by Lord Mackay to improve access to justice and will be the first time that a mediation service has been offered in conjunction with a court and with the support of the Lord Chancellor's Office.

The scheme is being run by Judge Neil Butter QC and will cover disputes ranging from £3,000 to £10,000. Under the scheme, parties agreeing to try mediation as a first step to resolving their dispute, will take part in a session within 28 days of agreement. The single session, with a trained mediator, will last up to three hours. If the parties do not reach agreement, their dispute will be referred to the court for listing.

Mediations will start at 4.30 pm each day and each party will pay £25 towards the mediator's expenses. When the pilot scheme is fully established, the court anticipates handling between 15 and 20 mediations a week.

Mediation organisations taking part in the pilot scheme are: The Academy of Experts; ADR Group; the Centre for Dispute Resolution; the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and Mediation UK.

## Company Archive Research Service

Business historians from the LSE are offering a new service to companies. In today's litigious world, company managers are increasingly facing product liability, pollution and other legal claims relating to corporate activities which may have happened many years before they were in the firing line. Researching the relevant documents for such cases is often a time-consuming and laborious task and involves going through archives which are scattered, and poorly indexed and stored.

Now, however, highly qualified business historians at the London School of Economics are helping corporate lawyers by going through the historical records of companies and combining what they discover with their expertise on the general state of scientific knowledge and business ethos at the relevant historical moment.

Terry Gourvish, Director of the LSE Business History Unit, can be contacted on 0171 955 7109 for further information on the service.