Book Review

Judicial Review of Administrative Action and Government Liability


There are a handful of Australian legal books that have become authorities in their own right. This is one of them. It is a superb book, featuring reliable and in-depth analysis, written in a lively style. It is both a pleasure to read and a basic reference. The authors occasionally pursue a contestable line of argument, but this simply adds to the worth of the book. Even if you disagree with the authors on a particular point, you will be left with a clearer picture of your own views.

The book’s focus is on judicial review, and does not purport to cover administrative law in general. This focus is one of its strengths, as it allows a comprehensive coverage of the case law. For this new edition, the book contains an additional chapter on government liability, mainly authored by a new contributor, Greg Weeks. This, together with substantial updates to the existing chapters, makes this new edition a worthwhile purchase.

A famous feature is its index, which is becoming a cut object in administrative law circles. I noticed entries on “cobber, fair cop”, “dog, High Court’s best friend” and “muddle, hopeless”.

Daniel Lunn, Commonwealth Office of Parliamentary Counsel