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**THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF ATTORNEYS IN A
LARGE SOUTH AFRICAN LAW FIRM**

by

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**A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of
Library and Information Science**

**Department of Information and Library Studies
University of Cape Town
2005**

Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study, which was carried out to investigate the information needs of the attorneys in a large South African law firm. The survey research method was employed and a single survey conducted within a particular time-span. Two methods of data collection were employed, namely the analysis of documentary sources and questioning. A combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews were used to gather the data. The questionnaire designed by the researcher consisted of closed and open-ended questions and a rating scale was used where appropriate to enable the respondents to express their opinions or strength of preferences. The majority of the questions included a general response category that made it possible for respondents to enter other relevant data and personal observations. The questionnaire was sent to all the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys via electronic mail. The email, which included the questionnaire as a MSWord attachment, introduced and explained the purpose of the questionnaire. All questions incorporated in the questionnaire were subjected to cross-tabulation to establish the impact of the independent or classification variables on the dependent variables. The following variables were considered during cross-tabulation: respondent's age, position in the firm and number of years experience as attorney. To establish which results were significant the Pearson chi-square statistical test was applied to all bivariate relations. Results that yielded a chi-square statistic below the .01 significance level were rejected.

This study sought to investigate why the attorneys need work-related information, what type of work-related information they require, which sources and systems of information they use and what the factors are that influence their information-seeking behaviour. As a law librarian, the researcher also investigated the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to the attorneys. The findings revealed that the attorneys required access to work-related information to provide a legal service to their clients and that their most important information need is to establish the current status of the law and to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments. The attorneys made use of various informal and personal sources of information (e.g. colleagues) and the library and required access to primary and secondary sources of law as well as non-legal information. The findings also indicated

that the attorneys required quick and easy access to current and accurate information and that factors such as age, number of years experience as an attorney and position in the law firm appeared to influence the use of the various sources and systems of information as the younger, less experienced attorneys had a greater need for the various sources and systems of information. The study also found that law librarians and libraries undoubtedly have an important role to play in the provision of work-related information.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 1

1 The information needs of attorneys in a large South African law firm

1.1 Background to the research problem

The information age has been characterized by widespread and voluminous production and consumption of information. As such attorneys operate in an information-intensive environment, and everything they do, whether providing legal advice, representing a client in court, or drafting a legal document requires information. Attorneys thus depend on relevant, precise and timely information for success in their profession.

Professionals, including attorneys, are engaged in a number of work roles, which includes the roles of service provider to the client, administrator or manager of the legal practice, researcher, educator and student (Leckie & Pettigrew, 1997:102). The provision of various types of services or expertise to their clients is the primary activity shared by all professionals, including attorneys. The various work roles and related tasks undertaken by professionals in the course of their daily work generate particular information needs, which in turn gives rise to an information seeking process (Leckie & Pettigrew, 1997:102). These work roles and tasks influence the type of information needed, the way in which it is retrieved and the use of the information. Therefore it is assumed that the information needs of attorneys arises out of situations pertaining to a specific task that is associated with one or more of the work roles undertaken by them (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:182).

As mentioned, it is surmised that attorneys' various work roles prompt particular information needs, which in turn should lead to information-seeking behaviour. However, a number of other factors could influence the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys. According to Otike and Matthews (2000:242) the information needs of attorneys are generally influenced by the nature of the legal work they do. The kind of information required is reflected by the kind of work an attorney does. Therefore the extent to which the information needs of attorneys differ depends on the nature of their work. Ultimately the work roles and tasks attorneys engage in

influence the type of information needed, the way in which it is retrieved and the eventual use of that information (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:173). According to Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain (1996:174) the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys is also likely to be influenced by various other personal and situational factors, such as the size of the law firm as well as personal factors such as the age and experience of an attorney.

Because the legal profession is such an information-intensive profession, law libraries are an important source of information to attorneys and law firms. If attorneys are to service their clients well and administer their practices effectively, they need well-stocked and staffed law libraries at their disposal. Libraries and information centres in law firms, like in other corporate organisations, exist to provide information support to the professional staff of the parent organisation, thus the law librarian needs to ensure that the information needs of the attorneys are met. It thus follows that the law library exists to support the goals of the parent organisation and as such its objectives must reflect those of the parent organisation. The measurement of the effectiveness of an information service is important because it justifies its existence. To ensure that the information needs of attorneys are met, law librarians will have to evaluate their information services, therefore ongoing needs assessment is essential to ensure that the information service meets the needs of the attorneys.

There is a need for research projects to examine the information needs of attorneys, with specific reference to the type of information required and the information sources consulted. Such research should include an examination of the role of law libraries in the provision of information in the legal environment. It should further also include an examination of the factors influencing the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys.

1.2 Objectives and significance of the research

It is the intention of this researcher to examine the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of a particular group of information users in the legal profession. The objective of the research is to determine the information needs of attorneys and the factors influencing the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys in a work-related environment, as well as to establish the reasons why attorneys need work-

related information, the kind of information required in meeting his/her information needs and the information resources used. The role of the law librarian and library in the provision of information will also be examined.

It is clear that it should be the aim of user studies to identify the information needs of users in order to design appropriate information systems and provide effective information services which serve the real needs of the information user. As mentioned, information needs assessments are essential to ensure that information systems and services are efficient and effective in meeting the information needs of users. Nicholas (1996:5) correctly states that "... it is only through customer satisfaction that success or effectiveness can be truly measured – and satisfaction can only be obtained by meeting user need".

A review of the professional literature has indicated that there has been a fair amount of research into the information needs and information seeking-behaviour of legal practitioners, including attorneys. However most of the published research relates to the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Little in-depth research appears to have been undertaken to establish the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of legal practitioners and in particular attorneys in South Africa. Therefore the research to be undertaken by this researcher will add to the body of knowledge in the field in general as well as provide a South African perspective. As such the research results should have the potential for practical application in corporate law libraries in South Africa.

The apparent lack of research on the subject of the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys in South Africa as well as the researcher's career long involvement in law librarianship has provided the motivation and rationale to undertake this study. In order to provide an effective information service it is necessary to understand the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of the user. Therefore the researcher wishes to investigate why attorneys need work-related information, what the work-related information needs of attorneys are, what type of work-related information they require, which sources of information they use and what factors influence their information-seeking behaviour. As a law librarian the

researcher also intends to investigate the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to attorneys.

1.3 Research questions

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- Why do attorneys seek information?
- What are the information needs of attorneys?
- What types of information do attorneys require?
- Which sources and systems of information do attorneys use?
- What are the factors influencing the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys?
- What is the role of the law library and librarian in the provision of information?

To answer the above research questions the following data had to be collected:

- Personal data including the age of attorneys, the number of years experience as an attorney, the attorney's position in the law firm and attorneys' field of legal specialization
- Data relating to the type of work attorneys do
- Data indicating where or from whom attorneys seek work-related information
- Data relating to the use and usefulness of various sources of information by attorneys
- Data relating to the use and usefulness of the law library

1.4 Research design and methodology

The research design incorporates both a conceptual and empirical component. The former is based on information taken from the literature and knowledge obtained from working in a law firm and discussions with colleagues. The latter is based on an empirical study in the form of a social survey.

1.4.1 Literature review

The benefits of a review of the literature on the subject to be investigated are numerous. According to Busha & Harter (1980:58) literature reviews are necessary to determine what research has already been completed on the subject and to gain a better understanding of the research problem. A thorough familiarity with the current literature relevant to the subject to be investigated helps research workers compile a list of important issues and questions. According to Wood (1969:263) a literature survey enables the researcher to formulate questions which allow comparison with the results of other surveys. The literature review also informs and provides a framework for the empirical study.

The researcher undertook a comprehensive bibliographic search of the South African Bibliographic and Information Network (SABINET), the University of Cape Town's Online Public Access (OPAC) ALEPH and the Internet. The Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) and Emerald, both indexing and abstracting services, were also consulted for this dissertation.

1.4.2 Empirical study

The researcher's study into the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys is essentially a user study. According to Powell (1991:61) survey research has been proven to be particularly useful for use and user studies. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that the survey research method would be the most appropriate for this study. Survey research is generally concerned with naturally occurring variables in natural settings and is considered to be appropriate for studying personal factors and for exploratory analysis of relationships (Powell, 1991:53, 54, 80). A cross-sectional research design was used, i.e. a single survey conducted within a particular time-span.

1.4.3 Survey population

The researcher surveyed the attorneys of Bowman Gilfillan, a large legal practice in South Africa. Bowman Gilfillan has approximately 210 attorneys, practicing in most

areas of the law and has offices in Gauteng and the Western Cape. The researcher surveyed the entire population of Bowman Gilfillan attorneys. The researcher is employed as a law librarian in the Cape Town office of Bowman Gilfillan and therefore has access to all the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys. Easy access to the population ensures that the researcher is able to collect the necessary data. Bowman Gilfillan has two other law librarians who serve one other library in Gauteng.

1.4.4 Data collection methods

Two methods of data collection, namely analysis of documentary sources and questioning were employed. The examination and analysis of documentary sources involved studying existing documents, which in this instance refers to literature on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys. Questioning is generally regarded as the most effective technique to use to establish information needs. In order to determine the information needs of professionals, such as attorneys, people have to be questioned in-depth about their work roles and tasks. In this regard interviews allow opportunities to question and explain to the user and so obtain in-depth data. In considering data collection methods to gather data about the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys a combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews appears to have several advantages. Attorneys generally have well-developed verbal and written skills well suited to completing self-administered questionnaires and dealing with interviews. Interviews were conducted with a smaller sample of attorneys after the self-administered questionnaires had been completed. The same topics were covered in the interviews but in greater depth than with the self-administered questionnaires in order to validate responses, clarify ambiguities and obtain further information.

1.5 Arrangement of chapters

- Chapter one introduces the research problem, states the objectives and significance of the research and the research questions to be answered. Chapter one also outlines the research design and methodology of the study.

- Chapter two defines the key concepts underpinning a study of the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of users. Chapter two also examines the communication and transfer of information.
- Chapter three reviews the literature on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys.
- Chapter four examines the role of the corporate law library and librarian in the provision of information and includes a discussion on the value of user needs assessments for libraries.
- Chapter five describes the sources of legal information available to South African law librarians and attorneys and comments on the role of South African law librarians and libraries in the provision of legal information. Chapter five also includes a brief overview of the nature of South African law and law firms. Chapters two to six thus inform the empirical research discussed in chapters six and seven.
- Chapter six discusses the empirical survey, including the research design of the study, the methods of data collection and the questionnaire administered to attorneys.
- Chapter seven discusses the findings of the research undertaken.
- Chapter eight contains the conclusion and recommendations.

1.6 Definitions

The terms attorney, lawyer and solicitor are used interchangeably in this study.

Chapter 2

2 Information needs and information seeking-behaviour

Essential to an understanding of users and their information needs and information-seeking behaviour is the clarification of the key concepts underpinning such a study. Concepts such as information needs, demands and wants are often used interchangeably. It is also necessary to seek definitions of information and communication relevant to the human communication process, examine the elements of the communication process and the factors influencing the communication and transfer of information. Finally, it is necessary to consider the implications of the human communication process for library and information centres.

2.1 Information

There have been many attempts to define the concept “information” and its relationships with other concepts such as data and knowledge. It is therefore necessary to seek a definition of information which is appropriate to the study of the communication and transfer of information.

Data, which is factual and very basic, can be seen to be the building blocks of information. Data therefore has the potential to become information, but for this to take place the relationship between pieces of data must be understood (Bellinger, 2004:1-2). Although information is meant to inform, it does not necessarily have meaning. Whether the pieces of data that represent information have meaning, depends on the user thereof as it is the individual who makes sense of the information, constructs reality, and decides on the usefulness of the information in a particular situation. The information is assimilated and structured to fit in with the user’s existing knowledge structure. Thus information is that which modifies a user’s internal knowledge structure (Westbrook, 1997:319). Dervin (1977:22) distinguishes between objective and subjective information. Objective information refers to external reality and subjective information to internal reality. Such subjective information varies from person to person and should be treated as having different meanings for each person. It would appear that information, as applied to information need studies,

is essentially internal. Information, in turn may be potential knowledge. Knowledge is the meaning individuals through their experience, values and beliefs add to information.

2.2 Communication

Communication can be regarded as the imparting, conveying or exchanging of ideas and knowledge whether by speech, writing or signs. Furthermore, human communication is a social activity, the act of sharing messages that are meaningful and have the potential to inform.

Communication is based on a relationship. The Shannon-Weaver model is regarded as one of the most influential models of information transfer. The model, simplified by Berlo, describes the communication system as consisting of a source of information, a message, channel of communication and a receiver of information. According to the model the message is relayed via a channel (the medium or carrier of the message) from the source or speaker to the receiver. The simplified Shannon-Weaver model says that the source (a person or group of people) communicates a message, through a channel to the receiver (McGarry, 1975:12-21). According to this model, the communication of information appears to be a one-way transfer of information from the source to the receiver. However, human communication is more than just the transfer of information from a source to a receiver. Dervin (1977:28) suggests “that the user is in control of his own sense-making processes and will attend to messages that might help him in these processes”.

The user of information is both a recipient and potential producer of information. This becomes possible when the recipient acquires sufficient knowledge to generate information. This would imply that all the parties involved in the communication process are both producers and users of information. Therefore, human communication is not a one-way transfer of information from information source to the receiver of information, but an interactive and creative process.

It is clear that all communication situations have certain elements in common. A user enters the communication system when he or she realise that they lack the knowledge

to deal with a specific problem or situation. Other components of the communication system are the potential sender of information and the information (message) and the channel of communication.

2.3 Information and the communication system

Having examined the concepts of information and communication it is necessary to investigate the relationship between the two concepts. Information refers to the message contained in the signals of human communication exchanged when humans react to internal or external stimuli to seek information. Information needs arise when a person recognises a gap in his or her knowledge and seeks information to bridge that gap. Whether a message (information) has meaning will depend on the user thereof, as it is the user who makes sense of the information and decides on the usefulness of the information in a particular situation. This view suggests that the user (or receiver) of the message controls the communication process, as it is the receiver who perceives a need for information and who makes sense of the information.

In this regard it is useful to examine the contribution of the cognitive viewpoint to information science. The essence of the cognitive viewpoint is that it “explicitly considers that the states of knowledge, beliefs and so on of human beings mediate that which they receive, perceive or produce” (Belkin, 1990:11-12). Belkin, Oddy and Brooks (1982:65) furthermore contend that the “interactions of humans with one another, with the physical world and with themselves are always mediated by their states of knowledge about themselves and about that with which or whom they interact”. Wilson (Belkin, 1990:13) points out that any interaction between the individual’s view of the world and what impacts on it is geared towards understanding or generating meaning from that which is perceived. Brookes, who was one of the first proponents of the cognitive view, held that an individual’s existing knowledge structure is modified by information, which leads to a new modified knowledge structure. Ingwersen (Belkin, 1990:13), in turn, pointed out that the individual has a knowledge structure, which he or she consults in order to understand, construct meaning and act in particular situations. Therefore the cognitive approach to information science focuses on the development of an information need out of an inadequate state of knowledge or anomalous state of knowledge concerning some

topic or situation. It is this anomalous state of knowledge (information need) which prompts an individual to enter a communication system. The user, faced with a problem, recognizes that his or her state of knowledge is inadequate for resolving the problem, and in an attempt to solve the problem, decides to obtain information about the problem area and its circumstances (Belkin, Oddy & Brooks, 1982:63).

2.4 Channels and modes of communicating information

The communication process involves the transfer or dissemination of information. Information can be disseminated in various modes and via various channels of communication. Thus the dissemination of information takes place via a communication channel, which is the medium by which information is conveyed from the sender of information to the receiver of the information. Channels of communication include books, journals and other types of media. Information is conveyed in various modes, including oral, written, printed and electronic mode. An examination of the various channels and modes of communicating information is necessary as information needs are met through accessing various information sources/channels in a variety of formats.

Channels of communication can be categorised as formal or informal channels of communication. Formal channels usually involve written modes of communication, whilst informal channels involve oral modes of communication. Formal and informal channels of communication, in turn can be either personal or impersonal. There has been much discussion on the importance of informal channels of communication, as informal channels of communication, such as personal conversations, are an important source of current information. In impersonal channels of communication the information is recorded and then transferred by means of a medium such as a book. Personal communication involves individuals and can be direct or indirect. Direct channels of communication usually contain the information sought, while indirect channels lead the user to the source or channel containing the information. It is accepted that an individual's preference for a specific information channel is influenced by the ease of use of a particular channel (Smith, 1991:90-91).

2.5 Factors affecting the communication of information and information-seeking behaviour

Various factors affect the communication process and information-seeking behaviour. It is therefore necessary to identify and examine these factors. Information needs arise when an individual recognises a gap in his or her knowledge and decides to seek information to bridge the gap in his or her knowledge structure. The user sets the communication process in motion by reacting to an information need, and as a result enters the communication system. Clearly information needs influence the communication process. An information need may be personal, work-related or arise as a result of a specific event or crisis. Individuals' information needs are highly subjective and are situational as they change as the situation changes. Information needs in turn are influenced by the personal characteristics of the user. Therefore the personal characteristics of the user have a significant influence on the communication of information.

Not only personal characteristics, but also environmental factors such as the person's work role influence the information-seeking behaviour of the user. According to Wilson (1981:9) human needs give rise to a need for information. Therefore individual and personal factors influence information-seeking behaviour. Various studies have demonstrated that the setting in which a person works (or lives) has a great influence on the need for information (Krikelas, 1983:10). Paisley (Krikelas, 1983:10) emphasized the importance of understanding the environment of work (or everyday life) as an influence on the nature and type of information requirements of individuals. Wilson (1981:9-10) contends that the immediate work environment probably has the greatest influence on the information needs of an individual. The organisational structure of the employing organisation also affects information-seeking behaviour, specifically the flow of information within, to and from an organisation. Organisations regulate roles, establish lines of responsibility and produce end-products which can either stimulate or impede the communication and flow of information (Smith, 1991:89). Furthermore factors such as the socio-cultural environment and the physical environment also influence the information-seeking behaviour of the user (Wilson, 1981:10). Thus the factors influencing the

communication of information include both individual and personal factors, as well as general environmental factors.

Nicholas (1996:36-41) in turn identified personality, time, access to information sources or systems, the cost of resources and information overload as factors affecting the information-seeking behaviour of the user. He outlined the effect of these factors as follows:

- Personality – Psychological characteristics, such as persistence, thoroughness, orderliness, motivation and receptiveness play a major role in determining whether information needs are met.
- Time – People want information that is short, to the point and it must preferably be immediately available.
- Access – People tend to seek out information that is most accessible. As such people usually use what is easiest and what is closest to hand. They do not always use what is best or most appropriate.
- Costs – The cost of using resources and finding information impacts on whether information will be sought or not.
- Information overload – Although we are currently experiencing an information explosion, people have less time to screen and digest information. Under these circumstances there is the risk that people will use less and less information.

From the foregoing, it is clear that information, as applied to the study of the transfer and communication of information, is concerned with internal information, which informs and modifies the user's internal knowledge structure. Human communication is the act of sharing messages that are meaningful and have the potential to inform. Individuals enter the communication system when they perceive a gap in their knowledge and seek to bridge that gap. Thus it is a need for information, which prompts an individual to enter the communication system. The communication process involves the transfer of information from a source (sender) to the user (receiver) of information. The dissemination of information takes place via a channel of communication and can be communicated orally, or in printed or electronic format.

A number of factors affect the communication of information. The information needs of the user are influenced by both the personal characteristics of the user as well as environmental factors. Of the environmental factors, the influence of the work environment of the user is of utmost importance.

2.6 Information needs, information wants and information demands

2.6.1 Information needs

Also referred to as user needs, information needs arise when a person recognises a gap in his or her knowledge and seeks information to bridge that gap. Krikelas (1983:8) defines information need as the “recognition of the existence of uncertainty” by an individual and it is situational and changes as the situation changes. Information needs may be personal, work-related or arise as a result of a specific event or crisis. It is clear that the information needs experienced by an individual are highly subjective.

Information needs can be said to arise out of a desire to meet one or more of the three basic human needs. According to Wilson (1981:7-9) individuals engage in information-seeking behaviour as part of their efforts to satisfy the following three basic human needs:

- Physiological needs – the need for food, shelter, etc.
- Affective needs (also called psychological or emotional needs) – the need for domination, security, etc.
- Cognitive needs – the need to plan, learn a skill, etc.

A number of other factors also give rise to information needs and influence information-seeking. In particular mention should be made of the role of the everyday living and work environment of the individual in contributing to and influencing the need for information (Wilson, 1981:9).

It is further necessary to distinguish between the different categories of information need. Taylor (Kuhlthau, 1991:363) identified four levels of information needs: unexpressed, conscious, formalized and compromised. An unexpressed information

need can be best seen as a sense of lacking in knowledge, but does not articulate a need for information. Taylor (Kuhlthau, 1991:363) describes a conscious information need as “a within-brain description of the need”, regards a formalized need as a formal statement of need and a compromised need, the question as presented to the information system. Nicholas (1996:8) points out that people do not always know what their needs are. A person might not know that he/she has a need for information as he/she might not be aware that there is information that could be of benefit to him/her. This is referred to as a dormant need. Krikelas (1983:8-9) identifies two further categories of need: immediate and deferred. Immediate needs lead to information-seeking behaviour, whilst deferred needs are associated with information gathering. In the case of deferred needs, information gathering does take place, however action/information-seeking is deferred.

2.6.2 Information wants

An information want is the information the individual would like to have, thereby representing a potential demand. There can however be a gap between what is needed and what is wanted. People may seek information they do not need. They may however also need information which they do not seek (Nicholas, 1996:9).

2.6.3 Information demands

An information demand is a request by an individual for information he/she believes he/she needs or wants and can be regarded as the first step in the information-seeking process. It is at this stage that the first contact is made between the user and the information professional and/or information system (Nicholas, 1996:9).

2.7 Information-seeking behaviour

Information-seeking behaviour results from the recognition of a need, perceived by the user. Individuals can be said to engage in information-seeking behaviour when they act upon and seek satisfaction of the need for information. Information-seeking involves an attempt to identify or locate the information that will satisfy their need. It is an attempt to reduce uncertainty and solve the problem which led to the information

need. According to Krikelas (1983:7) *“information seeking begins when someone perceives that the current state of possessed knowledge is less than that needed to deal with some issue (or problem). The process ends when that perception no longer exists.”*

As mentioned the search for information begins with the user’s problem. The gap between the user’s knowledge about the problem and what the user needs to know to solve the problem is the information need. It is the task of the user to form meaning from the information gathered, i.e. the information gathered has to make sense to the user. Rohde (1986:52) points out that people have internal stores of information which they use to make sense of external information and of the situations in which they find themselves at any given time. Westbrook (1997:319) refers to information-seeking as a process which is meant to bring about internal change in the individual seeking the information. Therefore the process of information-seeking can be said to be both highly personal and subjective.

2.8 Information-seeking process

According to Kuhlthau (1991:366-368) the information-seeking process consists of six stages:

- Initiation – This is the first stage of the information-seeking process, during which an individual becomes aware of a lack of knowledge or understanding and recognizes a need for information.
- Selection – During this stage the individual identifies and selects the topic to be investigated or the approach to be pursued.
- Exploration – During this stage the information seeker attempts to locate general information about the topic in order to gain a better understanding of the topic. At this stage the information-seeker is still unable to express exact information needs.
- Formulation – During this stage the information-seeker forms a focused perspective of the topic.

- Collection – The information-seeker is now able to seek information relevant to the focused perspective of the topic. During this stage the information-seeker is able to communicate his or her need for relevant, focused information to an intermediary, thereby facilitating a comprehensive search of all available resources.
- Presentation – This stage involves the completion of the search for information. Ideally the search for information should enable the information-seeker to understand the topic or problem. The information-seeker should now be able to use the information sought.

The above-mentioned six stages of the information-seeking process progress from recognizing an information need, to identifying a general topic, to exploring information on a general topic, to formulating a specific focus, to gathering information pertaining to the specific focus, to completing the search for information (Kuhlthau, 1991:368).

Westbrook (1997:330) in turn identifies five stages in the information-seeking process. Information need represents the first stage of the information process. Without a need for information, no information-seeking takes place. The second and third stages involve starting to work and working on the information need. During these two stages the information user formulates and seeks information. During the fourth stage the information-seeker decides on the value of the results of the information search. The final stage is the closing, during which the information-seeker decides to stop the search for information.

2.9 Information use

Hewins (1990:148-151) highlights the difference between information need and information use. As previously mentioned information need occurs when an individual acknowledges that there is a gap in his/her knowledge. The information needed to solve a problem may lead to an inquiry. Therefore information use is always preceded by a conscious information need. Nicholas (1996:10) distinguishes between two different types of information use, the intended use and unintended use

of information. Satisfied demand is seen as intended use. However information seekers also come across information in an accidental manner. This is referred to as the unintended use of information.

It is thus possible to define information use as the information that the user *actually* uses. Information use is that which has brought about change to the internal knowledge structure of the user. Brookes (Belkin, 1990:12) held that an individual's existing knowledge structure is modified by information, which leads to a new modified knowledge structure. Therefore information use involves decision-making and is about the impact of information.

2.10 Implications for library and information centres

The library and information science profession is intimately involved in the communication of information. Although the use of informal channels of communication by users has lately increased in importance, both formal and informal channels of communication are necessary (Wilkin, 1977:292). As a formal information communication system, library and information services provide a link between information sources and the users of information. The user or potential user is the library's reason for existence.

Library and information centres need to focus on the role of information in the user's everyday and working life and social setting. It is simply no longer adequate to focus exclusively on the information sources and systems used by the information-seeker. It was Belkin (1990:14) who pointed out that library and information services need to "consider the nature of the user's state of knowledge when designing systems whose goal is the eventual appropriate modification of that state of knowledge by the user". According to this viewpoint the major purpose of the library should be to contribute to the individual's sense-making processes. Dervin (1977:28) contends that the user will find the library useful, only if it is able to contribute to the individual's sense-making processes.

Belkin, Oddy & Brooks (1982:63) contend that it is generally accepted that the user is unable to specify precisely what is needed to resolve the anomaly or inadequate state

of knowledge. The user may have difficulty formulating and expressing his/her needs or may not know what he/she needs. This highlights the need for librarians and information managers to focus on the information needs of the user and specifically on the influence of the everyday living and work environment on the information needs of the individual. To be successful in helping users satisfy their information needs, librarians and information managers need to understand the difficulties and problems which give rise to a need for information. If library and information centres wish to continue to play a role in the dissemination and communication of information they will have to heed the information needs of their users and the factors influencing those needs.

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Chapter 3

3 Information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys

The provision of various types of services or expertise to their clients is the primary activity shared by all professionals, including attorneys. Attorneys retrieve, collect, evaluate and use a considerable amount of information to serve their clients. Professionals' daily work may include a variety of work roles and tasks. The work roles and related tasks undertaken by professionals in the course of their daily work prompt particular information needs, which in turn give rise to an information seeking process (Leckie & Pettigrew, 1997:102). These work roles and tasks influence the type of information needed, the way in which it is retrieved and the use of the information.

3.1 Work roles of attorneys

As mentioned, professionals including attorneys, are engaged in a number of work roles, which includes the roles of service provider, administrator or manager, researcher, educator and student (Leckie & Pettigrew, 1997:102). Attorneys' primary role is to act as their clients' legal representative. The provision of client service is fundamental to the success of any law firm, during which attorneys require information to assist them in providing advice to their clients on legal issues or problems that have legal implications. They furthermore require information to execute legal transactions, represent their clients in courts of law and also require information to manage the business of the firm (Otiye, 1995:12). Cohen (1976a:273) refers more specifically to the reasons why attorneys need information. In the first instance an attorney seeks to determine what the law is on a particular problem, or, how the court will act if the problem before it is ever litigated. In this instance the attorney seeks information as to the legal probabilities of winning the case so that he can advise his client on some proposed course of conduct. Second, attorneys may seek information to support an already determined position in order to persuade the court of what the law should be, what law should be applied, or how the law should be applied. Third, attorneys seek legal support for a client's position for a proposed course of action.

While the role of service provider to their clients is an attorney's primary work role, attorneys are also the managers and administrators of the legal firm. In this role attorneys encounter problems related to the administration of their law practice (Wilkinson, 2001:265, 270, 272). Operation Compulex, a study jointly undertaken by the Canadian Department of Justice and the Canadian Bar Association, found that the administrative or managerial role consists of tasks such as monitoring the firm's financial situation, training students and delegating work to secretarial staff. This particular work role involves the creation and use of information about budgeting, personnel, organisational procedures, etc. (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:174).

The roles of attorneys as service providers and administrators and managers of their legal practice were addressed above, while an attorney's role as researcher may be seen to include writing publications and speaking at conferences. The role of educator includes supervising junior attorneys as well as lecturing at the local universities. The attorney as student would include attending conferences, taking advanced courses, and keeping up-to-date with new developments in the legal field (Leckie, Pettigrew and Sylvain, 1996:163, 181-182). It is clear that the information needs of attorneys arise out of situations pertaining to a specific task that is associated with one or more of the work roles undertaken by an attorney.

3.1.1 Attorneys and legal research

Cheatle (1992:85) and Kidd (1981:35) define legal research as the research of a legal problem by reference to secondary and primary sources of law. According to Marnewick (2003:250) the purpose of legal research is to find the applicable law in order to advise clients with a full understanding of the law. According to these definitions, tasks involving legal research are present in every attorney's practice. Wilkinson (2001:272-274) likewise found that legal research is associated with specific tasks inherent in the practice of law.

The delegation of legal research appears to be a common occurrence in the legal profession. Otike (1999:33) found that the majority of lawyers preferred to delegate legal research. The reason for this is that lawyers do not have sufficient time available

to do legal research and legal research is therefore often delegated to junior legal staff and law librarians. Operation Compulex (1972:10) also found that lawyers in the larger firms preferred to delegate legal research to law students. Legal billing is currently based to a large extent on the time spent on a particular matter. Attorneys generally bill at hourly rates and as the hourly rates for junior legal staff are lower than for the more experienced attorneys, clients pay less for legal research done by the junior staff. With regard to librarians Otike (1999:33) found that librarians are used for legal research where law libraries exist and where qualified and experienced library staff are employed. The role of the law library and librarian in the provision of information is discussed in chapter four.

3.2 Attorneys' information-seeking behaviour

As mentioned, attorneys' various work roles give rise to a need for information, however a number of other factors also influence attorneys' information-seeking behaviour. These factors include the level of specialization, experience, size of the law firm, the cost of obtaining the information as well as the standing of the client.

The information needs of attorneys are generally influenced by the nature of the legal work undertaken. It is these activities over any other factor that influence the kind of information required. It is commonly recognised that certain areas of the law (such as conveyancing) do not require the same amount of legal research or supporting documents as other more labour intensive and expensive areas of law (such as taxation and litigation). As such, all areas of the law do not require the same amount of legal research and information. Therefore the information required by an attorney will vary because attorneys and law firms differ in the areas of law they specialise in (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:173). It must also be mentioned that individual attorney's work comprises both routine and complex tasks, with a possible greater need for information when involved in a more complex task (Kuhlthau & Tama, 2001:30-31).

The information needs of attorneys are also influenced by individual demographics, such as the age and experience of an attorney. Cohen (1976a:272-280) in his article on the research habits of lawyers focused on legal research as part of the attorneys'

information-seeking behaviour and found that attorneys in smaller firms generally devoted more time to legal research and that more experienced attorneys devoted less time to legal research than their less experienced colleagues. This is most likely due to the more experienced attorney being able to draw on his or her own personal knowledge and colleagues to a greater extent than the less experienced attorney (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:175). Therefore older and more experienced attorneys may have less need to consult various information sources than newly qualified attorneys. Newly qualified attorneys can be said to seek information more often because they are inexperienced (Otikey & Matthews, 2000:243). Furthermore, attorneys in larger law firms are more likely to be able to delegate legal research to junior staff. Therefore specialization in a specific area of the law and experience allows attorneys to do less legal research. More experienced attorneys also appear to seek and acquire information in the light of how it will be presented or communicated to the client. The experienced attorney when presented with a problem, seeks information with a view of the purpose to which the information will be put, while the less experienced attorney appears to put information together with less regard for a solution to the problem his/her client has presented him/her with (Cole & Kuhlthau, 2000:107-110).

According to Otikey and Matthews (2000:243) the size of the law firm also has an influence on the amount of information an attorney requires. Attorneys in a small firm will require more information because of the tendency for attorneys in small law firms to practise in several areas of the law. In the larger law firms, individual attorneys tend to specialise in fewer areas of the law, which allows the attorney to spend less time on research.

The Operation Compulex study (1972:7-8) found that the importance of the client, the complexity of the client's problem and the amount of money involved, all had an influence on the need for information. Operation Compulex (1972:8) also found that the cost of legal research, which includes the cost of the information resource, as well as the cost of labour in obtaining the information would likely influence the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys.

3.3 Nature of the information needs of attorneys

It is clear that the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys is greatly influenced by their work roles. Information needs arise out of situations pertaining to a specific task that is associated with one or more of the attorney's work roles (Leckie, Pettigrew & Sylvain, 1996:182). Therefore, for the purpose of this research project, information needs will be seen to be the situation that arises when an attorney encounters a work related problem and realises that he or she has insufficient personal knowledge to solve the problem and that he or she has to seek appropriate information to resolve the problem.

Attorneys require information for a variety of purposes. The law changes constantly as new legislation and decisions of the court are introduced that interpret the law. Keeping up-to-date with new legislation and the latest court decisions can be regarded as the most important reasons why attorneys need information. Such information is basic to legal research and practice. New legislation often takes immediate effect and can have immediate consequences for clients. If a lawyer does not keep up-to-date with new legislation and the latest court decisions, there is the likelihood of providing advice or an opinion based on out-dated law. The latest most up-to-date legal information should therefore be speedily available.

Cheatle (1992:140-142) in her case study on the information needs of solicitors in London (United Kingdom) identified five information needs, including the need for current awareness and the need to look at past case law. Attorneys need to keep up-to-date with the latest developments in the legal field and have access to accurate and complete information to be able to provide advice to their clients. However, attorneys also frequently need to look at past case law and repealed legislation. As Cohen (1976a:274) correctly stated "... in law, a decision two hundred years old can still be a crucial authority ...".

Attorneys also have a need for legal rules and general knowledge, including knowledge of their client's business and practical knowledge. Attorneys need for knowledge of their client's business may involve a need for non-legal information. Kidd (1981:27) in his study of Scottish solicitors' use of legal information identified

three information needs, namely the need to keep up-to-date with the law, the need to look up the law and the need to acquire and apply legal “know-how”. “Looking up the law” includes the checking of a point of practice or procedure (legal rules), consideration of a legal point by reference to secondary sources of law as well as legal research which involves solving a legal problem by reference to secondary and primary sources of law. Acquiring and applying legal “know-how” is defined as a combination of expertise, technique and knowledge and comes from knowing what is stated in the various legal information sources as well as practical experience (Kidd, 1981:33-34, 35, 40).

Attorneys have a number of other information needs, including a need for information on forth-coming seminars, conferences, etc. Attorneys attend seminars and conferences to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments, including being aware of new areas of law that is being developed. Such seminars and conferences also allow attorneys the opportunity to interact informally with colleagues. In this way information is exchanged and informal contacts are established. Attorneys, furthermore require information on leading authorities/experts in different areas of the law. They often require legal publications and need to know where and how to find the law (Haruna and Mabawonku, 2001:72).

3.4 Sources of legal information

Attorneys’ use of information is greatly influenced by their information needs. The information needs of attorneys determine the kind of information required, where to find the required information, and how it should be accessed. Attorneys consult a variety of information sources, including legislation, law reports, law books and journals and colleagues. Sources of information can be categorised according to whether they are formal or informal sources of information. Formal sources of information are those sources of information which involve written (including paper copy and electronic text) modes of communication, whilst informal sources of information involve oral modes of communication. Information sources can be further regarded as being either internal or external sources of information, which refers to a source within or outside the law firm.

3.4.1 Formal sources of information

Formal sources of information include legislation, law reports, legal textbooks and law journals as well as internal office documents. These formal sources of legal information can in turn be categorised as primary or secondary sources of information. Legislation and law reports are examples of primary sources of legal information, whilst legal textbooks and law journals are secondary sources of legal information. The attorney's need for up-to-date, accurate and complete legal information necessitates an attorney having access to up-to-date sources of legal information, including legislation, law reports, legal textbooks and law journals. Otiye (1999:36) found that legal textbooks are the most frequently used of all legal information sources. An up-to-date legal textbook provides background information on a particular subject and also provides references to the most recent legislation and case law.

A study by Kuhlthau and Tama (2001:34-35) highlighted the importance of internal information sources. Therefore it is necessary to take a closer look at in-house information sources, the information contained therein and the importance thereof. Attorneys require not only information about legislation and case law, but also information about similar previous matters or situations, information about their clients and their industries, marketing information and financial information (about clients and about the firm). Opinions and precedents are both internal sources of information. Many attorneys are good at organising their opinions and precedents and law firms have in many cases taken steps to facilitate the retrieval of these documents and information created within the firm. Best practice collections, which include precedents and legal opinions, exist in many law firms. Unfortunately a wealth of internal information is often unorganised and therefore difficult to retrieve.

Mention must also be made of electronic legal resources, such as CD-ROM technology and legal information accessed via the Internet. Little appears to have been written about attorneys and their use of electronic information resources. Kuhlthau and Tama (2001:32, 40-41) in their study of New Jersey lawyers found that the perceived shortcomings of electronic resources prevented attorneys from using

these resources extensively. The lawyers who took part in the study expressed a preference for print texts over computer databases.

3.4.2 Informal sources of information

Attorneys also consult informal sources of information. Conversations with attorneys and other professionals are examples of informal sources of information. Colleagues, as informal sources of information, are also both internal and external sources of information, as lawyers also consult attorneys and other professionals outside the law firm.

Wilkinson (2001:268-269, 271) in her study of Canadian lawyers found that lawyers prefer informal sources of information. The study found that the size of the firm has an influence on an attorney's preference for internal or external sources of information. It appeared that lawyers in larger firms preferred the use of internal sources of information, whilst lawyers from smaller firms showed a preference for external sources of information. Otike's (1999:32, 37) study of the information needs of English lawyers also indicated a preference for colleagues as a source of information. Otike (1999:32) found that lawyers contact colleagues in the first instance before consulting printed or electronic sources of information.

Attorneys often have their own personal collection of legal information in their offices or at home. Several studies have found that attorneys appear to refer to their personal information resources as a first resort (Cheatle, 1992:86 & Otike, 1999:31). According to Otike (1999:35) lawyers consult other sources only when their personal collections are unable to provide the required information.

Leckie, Pettigrew and Sylvain (1996:184) refer to personal knowledge and experience as another source of information. As previously mentioned individual attorneys' level of experience influences the information-seeking process. More experienced attorneys are able to draw on their own professional knowledge and experiences and as such they have less need for legal information.

A discussion of the sources of information consulted by attorneys is incomplete without a discussion of the role of the law library in the provision of information. Haruna and Mabawonku (2001:75) in their study of the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of legal practitioners in Lagos, Nigeria, found that the law library is the information source most heavily consulted by lawyers seeking work-related information. The role of the law library in the provision of work-related information is discussed in chapter four.

3.5 Non-legal information

Attorneys require not only a vast amount of legal information, but also non-legal information. According to Operation Compulex (1972:1, 37) attorneys require three different categories of information, including legal information, legally-related information as well as operational information. Operational information includes both processed and administrative information. Processed information refers to documents generated in the course of servicing clients, whilst administrative information refers to clients names' and matters, client invoice data, hourly billing rates as well as staff payroll data, manuals of firm policy and procedures. Attorneys also require non-legal information relating to their clients and their businesses.

3.6 Factors influencing the use of information sources

Knowledge of various information sources and the perceptions formed about the process, or about the information retrieved, play a crucial role in the information-seeking process. Thus the individual's awareness about information resources and/or content can determine the path that information-seeking will take. Leckie, Pettigrew and Sylvain (1996:184-186) have identified various factors such as familiarity, prior success, trustworthiness, packaging, timeliness, cost, quality and accessibility as being able to influence a lawyer's use of a particular source of information.

- Familiarity - Research has shown that attorneys are more likely to use an information source if they are familiar with the information source and the source of information has previously proved to be useful.

- Timeliness - Attorneys often have to meet deadlines and as a result immediacy is of great importance (Carey & Patrick, 2000:98-99). As attorneys' time is limited, timeliness is of great importance and they will access only those information sources which are quick and easy to use. Information which is obtained too late, may no longer be relevant.
- Quality - As previously mentioned, attorneys need to keep up-to-date with the latest developments in the legal field and have access to accurate and complete information to be able to provide advice to their clients. Therefore the 'trustworthiness' of a source of information to provide up-to-date and accurate information plays a role in the choice of information source used.
- Accessibility – Quick access and ease of use are important factors in determining the use of information sources. Leckie, Pettigrew and Sylvain (1996:186) suggest that the accessibility of information can be influenced by physical proximity as well as other considerations. As mentioned previously various studies have found that attorneys appear to prefer their own personal information resources as a first resort (Cheatle, 1992:86 & Otike, 1999:31, 35) and that they consult other sources only when their personal collections are unable to provide the required information.
- Packaging - The format (written or electronic) in which information is available can also influence the choice of use of information source as an attorney may require information in a specific format. An attorney may require information in an electronic format in order to e-mail the information to a client or apply word-processing to the document.
- Cost - The cost involved in accessing a particular information source can also affect the decision whether an attorney decides to use the source of information or not. Cheatle (1992:150) found that the importance of satisfying an information need ultimately influences the expenditure involved in obtaining the information required.

Attorneys require a wealth of legal and non-legal information to perform their various work roles and tasks. The information needs of lawyers arise out of situations pertaining to a specific task that is associated with one or more of the work roles performed by an attorney. As providers of a professional service attorneys need

information to succeed at their primary role as their clients' legal representative. Attorneys also attend to a number of other work related roles, including the administration and management of their law practice. The survey of the literature on the subject of attorneys' information needs and information-seeking behaviour indicates that while attorneys' need for information is greatly influenced by their work roles and tasks, there are also other factors, such as personal demographics (age and experience) and environmental factors such as the size of the firm which influence attorneys' information-seeking behaviour. Attorneys' most important information need is to keep up-to-date with new legislation and the latest court decisions as keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments is necessary to fulfil their primary role as their client's legal representative. To fulfil their information needs lawyers consult a variety of formal and informal sources of information, including legislation, law reports, legal textbooks, law journals and colleagues.

Chapter 4

4 The corporate law library's role in information provision

The legal profession is an information-intensive profession, therefore law libraries are an important source of information to lawyers and law firms. If attorneys are to service their clients well and administer their practices effectively, they need well-stocked and staffed law libraries at their disposal. Libraries and information centres in law firms, like in other corporate organisations, exist to provide information support to the professional staff of the parent organisation, thus the law librarian needs to ensure that the information needs of the attorneys are met.

4.1 Definition of a law library

According to Blunt (Masango, 1997:1, 20, 21) the contents of a law library are traditionally made up of primary and secondary sources of law. Legislation and law reports are examples of primary sources of law, whilst secondary sources of law include legal textbooks and law journals. These secondary sources of law are about law, but are not themselves sources of legal authority and are therefore not binding.

As previously indicated attorneys also require non-legal information whilst undertaking their different work roles and tasks. For example attorneys may need information on the administration of a legal practice, information about their client's business, etc. Law libraries are therefore increasingly providing an information service covering any topic the lawyer requests information on. According to Cheatle (1992:13) "the law library is increasingly being expanded into a generalised information service".

4.2 Competencies of law librarianship

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) has defined a set of competencies for law librarianship, thereby defining the profession of law librarianship and its value to the legal field. The AALL competencies include a set of core competencies, which apply to all law librarians and specialized competencies

which relate to specific areas of practice. The core competencies listed by the AALL include a commitment to excellent client service, understanding and supporting the culture and context of the library and its parent institution, knowledge of the legal system and the legal profession and a commitment to working with others to achieve common goals. The specialized competencies relate to library management, reference, research and client services, information technology, collection care and management and teaching. The specialized competencies relating to reference, research and client services stipulate that law libraries provide skilled and customized reference services on legal and relevant non-legal topics and assists users with legal research using both print and electronic resources. According to the AALL competencies law librarians are furthermore expected to monitor trends in specific areas of the law. With regard to training, law librarians are expected to educate users in the methodologies of legal research and provide training in the use of legal resources in various formats (American Association of Law Libraries, 2001:14-15). The AALL competencies are therefore an indication of the skills and knowledge required by law librarians to serve their users well.

Cohen (1976b:106-107) has also emphasized the importance of a law library furthering the goals of the parent organisation and holds that law librarians should know the policies and purposes of the organisation they work for. It is important that law librarians know their users and the nature and content of their work. Therefore law librarians must get to know the information needs of the attorneys they serve.

Law librarianship involves having knowledge of legal information and its management. As the amount of information available in the electronic age is overwhelming, law firms expect their librarians to manage and access legal information in print and electronic formats and to deliver this information efficiently and cost-effectively.

4.3 Corporate law libraries and the provision of information

Various studies (Otike, 1999:34, Haruna & Mabawonku, 2001:75, 80-81) have found that attorneys regard law firm libraries, staffed by qualified librarians as an important source of information. According to Otike (1999:31-32) lawyers consult law libraries

for a number of reasons, including to find specific information, carry out legal research, find a particular publication and to keep abreast of current developments in law.

In a law firm the user group consists of a relatively small group of busy and frequently very demanding fee earners (attorneys). Attorneys need access to up-to-date, timely, complete and accurate legal information. As mentioned previously keeping up-to-date with new legislation and the latest court decisions can be regarded as the most important information needs of attorneys. Therefore the current awareness services function of the law library is an important service of the law library as its purpose is to keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest developments in the legal field. As time is money for lawyers they prefer information to be packaged and presented to them rather than to have to grapple with numerous information sources. Susskind (1999:148) emphasizes the need for law librarians to be proactive and provide information in expectation of what it is lawyers may need. Kuhlthau and Tama (2001:39, 42) contend that unless law librarians are able to play a role in the development of personalised information services the role of law librarians in the provision of information will be limited. Law librarians must provide customised and value-added services and with this in mind should analyse and repackage information to meet the needs of individual attorneys. It is therefore necessary that law librarians understand the work of individual attorneys, the different types of information needed by attorneys and the range of access to information required to accomplish the variety of attorneys' work-related tasks.

Cole and Kuhlthau (2000:111-112) suggest that law librarians ask the user about the intended use of the information requested to better understand the information need and thus to provide the required value-added services. Haruna and Mabawonku (2001:70) point out that it is necessary to determine the information needs of users to ensure the appropriateness of library resources in meeting the demands of the user. In this regard Otike (1995:13-14) emphasizes the importance of the evaluation of the information service. A user-centred approach needs to be applied in the design of information systems and the provision of information must be tailored to serve the personal information needs of a particular lawyer (Kuhlthau & Tama, 2001:42).

4.3.1 Information technology in law libraries

The proliferation of legal information, and the publication thereof in printed and electronic format is bound to influence both attorneys and law librarians. Traditionally the legal profession has been regarded as a conservative profession, which serves as a possible explanation for the legal practitioner's apparent reluctance to use electronic resources and their continued preference for the printed media. Otike (1999:39) found that the legal profession continued to rely on the printed media and that the law firm librarian was the most extensive user of electronic resources. Garratt (2002:32) in her year-long study on the cost of information services in South African law firms, found that print-based information remained the backbone of the South African law firm collection. Attorneys appeared to prefer the flexibility of printed texts when required to skim large sections of texts, or when they wish to take texts into consultation or home. Research conducted by the Law Foundation of New South Wales (Australia) found that although attorneys did not use electronic resources very often, younger attorneys were more likely to use electronic resources (Reynolds, 1994:137). The reluctance of the legal profession to use electronic resources highlights the need for law librarians to educate and train attorneys in the use of legal resources in general and electronic resources in particular.

4.4 Information needs assessment

The major aim of the librarian and information manager is to service people who require information. This highlights the importance of the individual's information needs being met. It further illustrates the role of the individual in the information-seeking process and places the user in a central position. Therefore it should be the aim of user studies to identify the information needs of users in order to design appropriate information systems in general, and in particular to provide effective information services which serve the real needs of the information user.

4.4.1 User needs studies

In the past research on information needs and use tended to focus on examining users in terms of the systems they use, or the groups to which they belong. The assumption

was that a study of the systems and the groups to which they belong would reveal the users' information needs. The emphasis was on studying users by studying the characteristics of a group to which the user belongs. This approach led to studies on how groups, such as doctors, use information (Hewins, 1990:154, 165). Thus, it was assumed that specific groups have specific information needs. User studies research tended to concentrate on the *means* by which people discover information, rather than upon the *ends* served by the information-seeking behaviour (Wilson, 1981:10).

Hewins (1990:154) points out that an examination of the information science literature reveals that the focus of research has now shifted to the user and user behaviour. As such there should be a shift in the focus of research from an examination of the information sources and systems used by the information-seeker to an examination of user behaviour. According to Dervin and Nilan (1986:14) it is necessary to examine the factors that lead to a user's encounter with information systems and the consequences of such an encounter. Therefore it is necessary to explore the role of information in the user's everyday life, including his/her work life. The central question of information need studies should be to determine *why* the user decides to seek information. Dervin and Nilan (1986:6-7, 10, 15) highlighted the move from research that emphasized an information system perspective and system performance measurement to user-oriented studies, which make information needs and use a central focus of information systems. Systems-oriented studies measure the extent to which users use different kinds of sources, media, systems, documents, materials or channels. Therefore traditional information need and use research focused on externals (e.g. contacts with sources and the use of systems as indicators of needs) rather than internals (e.g. cognitive assessments). The user-oriented approach suggests that the focus of user studies should be on the users themselves and not on the information systems. Therefore information need studies should address the question of 'why' the user decides to seek information, the purposes of the search for information, and to what use it will be put when received. This will make it possible to relate the delivery of information to the need.

Dervin and Nilan (1986:19-24) have identified three approaches to information needs assessment, wherein a user-oriented approach to information needs assessment is reflected. The user-values approach focuses on the perceptions of utility and value

with regard to information systems. The sense-making approach examines the way in which people make sense of their worlds and how information is used in the process. The anomalous states-of-knowledge (ASK) approach examines how people seek information concerning some topic or situation about which their knowledge is incomplete. These three approaches focus on identifying user characteristics rather than on measuring system performance. It should be the objective of user studies to obtain information to improve information systems and services. The user must be the central focus of information needs and use studies as a lack of user orientation is a stumbling block to a more efficient and effective information service. Therefore it is necessary to identify the information needs of users to design information delivery systems which better serve the needs of the information user.

4.4.2 Libraries and user needs' assessments

The library and information science professional should aim for a better understanding of the user and information-seeking behaviour. This will enable the development of more effective information systems. This could in turn lead to benefits for the library and information services, such as reduction in the marginality of the information service and a possible increase in the use of information services (Wilson, 1981:12).

As mentioned, information needs' assessments are essential to ensure that information systems and services are efficient and effective in meeting the information needs of users. Nicholas (1996:5) correctly stated that "... it is only through customer satisfaction that success or effectiveness can be truly measured – and satisfaction can only be obtained by meeting user need".

Libraries and information centres in law firms, like in other corporate organisations, exist to provide information support to the professional staff of the parent organisation, thus law librarians need to ensure that the information and research needs of the attorneys are met. It thus follows that the law library exists to support the goals of the parent organisation and as such its objectives must reflect those of the parent organisation. The measurement of the effectiveness of an information service is important because it justifies its existence. To ensure that the information needs of

attorneys are met law librarians will have to evaluate their information services, therefore ongoing needs assessment is essential to ensure that the information service meets the needs of the clients.

There are however a number of other reasons for evaluating information services. Nicholas (1996:4-5) points out that librarians are increasingly being called upon to evaluate information activities as justification for the need for additional resources. Evaluation can be used to support the law librarian in the quest for additional resources. Law firms will not spend money on their libraries if the librarian is not able to motivate the expenditure in terms of information systems and services which reflect the information needs of their clients. Furthermore, evaluation enables librarians to ascertain the general performance of the information service and whether the resources are adequate to meet all its activities (Otiye, 1995:13-14). Haruna and Mabawonku (2001:70) have highlighted the necessity to determine the information needs of users to ensure the appropriateness of library resources in meeting the demands of the user. It is clear that the evaluation of the information service and the determination of the information needs of its clients of the library is an important function of the management of a law library.

Law libraries exist to provide information support to the professionals of the law firm, thus the law librarian needs to ensure that the information needs of the attorneys are met. Therefore law librarians must identify the information needs of the attorneys they serve to ensure the information service meets the information needs of the attorneys. As such law librarians must undertake information needs assessments to identify the information needs of the legal practitioners and to ensure that the information service meets the needs of the clients and that the library collections and programs of service are relevant to the information and communication needs of clientele.

Chapter 5

5 South African law libraries and legal information

South Africa has during the past decade undergone great political, economic and social changes. These changes as well as new trends in the practise of law, the development of information technology and the proliferation in the amount of published legal information impact on legal practitioners, law firms and law librarians in South Africa.

5.1 The law of South Africa

South African law consists of common law (previous decisions of the superior courts, and rules set down by the 'old Roman-Dutch authorities') and statutory law (Acts of the national and provincial legislatures, and governmental regulations). South Africa is a constitutional state, with a supreme Constitution and a Bill of Rights. Following the introduction of the final Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, many areas of South African law are open to change.

Stiebel (2001:52) points out that the final Constitution has had the effect that almost every legal question is examined through the lense of the Bill of Rights enshrined in the new Constitution. The revision and reinterpretation of the laws of the country has resulted in a vast amount of new legal literature to replace outdated works. It has therefore placed legal practitioners under pressure to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments.

5.1.1 Statutory law

The South African Parliament is bicameral and consists of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Legislation is promulgated by the passage of legislation through both Houses of Parliament. Bills are passed by both Houses of Parliament and thereafter sent to the President for assent. Each act of parliament is published in the Government Gazette, which is the official publication of the Government of South Africa. The commencement date of the Act may be proclaimed

separately by the President and published by notice in the Government Gazette at a later date.

Legislation may be primary or secondary. Primary legislation takes the form of the above-mentioned statutes. Secondary legislation, referred to as “subordinate” or “delegated”, consists of law which has the full force of statute but which has been laid down by lesser bodies authorised to do so by parliament. Regulations are issued by government ministers in terms of the relevant enabling section of an act of parliament, have the force of law and are therefore a form of secondary legislation (Horak, 1997:11, 25). Regulations are important in the interpretation of statutes and therefore must be readily available.

5.1.2 The judiciary and judicial precedent

The South African superior courts include the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeal and the various High Courts. In addition to the superior courts, district and regional courts hear certain civil and criminal matters. Judges mark certain cases as reportable and publishers then exercise their editorial discretion in the matter of selection. The decisions of the lower courts are not reported. Obtaining a copy of an unreported judgment can be problematic for legal practitioners. Therefore various legal publishers now make a selection of unreported judgments available.

Judicial precedent refers to the interpretation of legislation by the South African courts. Case law in South Africa follows the *stare decisis* rule, in terms of which a lower court is bound by the decisions of higher courts. The more senior the court or the greater the number of concurring judges, the greater the authority of the judicial pronouncement.

Attorneys require not only the latest case law, but also look at past case law. Trying to determine the weight of authority of a case can be a time-consuming task for the attorney or law librarian requiring the information. A legal citator enables the user thereof to determine the weight of authority of case law by examining the manner in which a specific case has been used as precedent in other cases. In South Africa the Butterworths Legal Citator (BLC) allows the user to research the precedential

standing of any reported judgment. The BLC enables the user to determine whether a particular case has been received positively or negatively by other courts, and whether or not it has been overturned on appeal or review (Johnson, 2002:38).

5.2 The South African law firm and legal practitioners

The Attorneys Act 53 of 1979 consolidates the laws relating to the admission and practice of attorneys, notaries and conveyancers as well as laws relating to the Attorneys Fidelity Fund and the law societies in the country. The Law Society of South Africa is the umbrella body of the attorneys' profession in South Africa. The attorney's training is completed through practical work undertaken as a candidate attorney after having completed a relevant law degree at university.

5.3 South African sources of legal information

As mentioned previously the South African legal practitioner is faced with the publication of an ever-increasing number of sources of legal information, print as well as electronic (CD-ROM and the Internet). Two major publishers dominate the publication of legal resources in South Africa, LexisNexis Butterworths and Juta Law. However there are several other smaller niche publishers, including the Law Publisher and Siber Ink. South African legal practitioners therefore have access to a vast amount of legal information, which includes the following categories of formal sources of legal information:

- **Legislation** – The law changes constantly as new legislation is introduced, therefore keeping up-to-date with new legislation can be regarded as one of the most important information needs of attorneys. Therefore every law library should have access to a complete and up-to-date set of South African statutes. The official version of an Act of Parliament is initially published in the Government Gazette. As Acts are regularly subject to amendment, the amended acts are republished in the Butterworths Statutes of South Africa. This is a loose-leaf publication of consolidated acts ('as amended'), kept up-to-date by biannual supplements. Juta Law, in turn, publishes Juta's Statutes of South Africa, an annual publication comprising seven bound volumes. Both

LexisNexis Butterworths and Juta Law also publish the South African statutes in electronic format. These are available either as CD-ROM products, or on-line from the publisher's websites. Bills (legislation prior to enactment) of Parliament are published separately and are obtainable from the Government Printer. Draft Bills are however occasionally published in the Government Gazette.

- **Other legislation services** – Loose-leaf publications consist mostly of various acts and regulations and usually include commentary discussing the statutory material. The loose-leaf format allows for the easy updating of legislation and commentary on the legislation and ensures that a legal practitioner has access to the latest, most up-to-date version of an act in consolidated format. These loose-leaf publications are probably one of the most important resources in South African law libraries.
- **Government Gazettes** – The Government Gazettes of South Africa are published by the Government Printer and include the full text of South African Acts, regulations, green and white papers and other government information. Juta Law publishes the full-text of the Government Gazettes on CD-ROM, while SABINET (South African Bibliographic Network) makes available an online, searchable version of the full-text Government Gazette.
- **Law reports** – A number of law reports cover the earliest South African cases, with the Cape cases dating back to 1828. Prior to the Union in 1910, law reports were published for each of the High Courts in the Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal. From 1910 onwards, decisions of the Appellate Division were also reported. In 1947 Juta began publishing the *South African Law Reports* (SALR) on a monthly basis. The SALR include judgments from all the South African superior courts as well as selected judgments from Zimbabwe and Namibia. LexisNexis Butterworths has been publishing the *All South African Law Reports* (All SA) twice a month since 1996. The All SA replaced the *Prentice Hall Weekly Law Reports*, which were published from 1923 to 1995 (Barratt & Snyman, 2002:7). Although there is a certain amount of overlapping between the two series of law reports, each series contains cases not reported in the other. LexisNexis Butterworths recently published the *South African Law Reports, 1828-1946* in electronic

format. The 1990's saw a proliferation of law reports in South Africa, with a number of specialised law reports published by both LexisNexis Butterworths and Juta Law. Every law library probably has a general series of law reports, whilst legal practitioners who are frequently briefed on areas of law in which specialised law reports exist are likely to take out subscriptions to these specialised law reports as well. Specialised law reports series from Juta Law include the *Industrial Law Journal* (published since 1980) and the *South African Criminal Law Reports* (published since 1990). LexisNexis Butterworths also publishes a number of law reports specialising in specific areas of law, such as the *Butterworths Constitutional Law Reports*, *Butterworths Labour Law Reports* and *Butterworths Pensions Law Reports*. Both LexisNexis Butterworths and Juta Law produce electronic versions of the law reports outlined above. These are available either as CD-ROM products or online from the publishers' websites. The Law Publisher, a small niche publisher, also publishes several specialist law reports, such as the *Commercial Law Reports* and the *Shipping Cases of South Africa*.

- **Textbooks** – The number of South African legal textbooks published increases with each passing year. There is a core group of works which is usually available in every law firm (Stiebel, 2002:54).
- **Law journals** – There are a fair number of law journals published in South Africa, and most law libraries will probably subscribe to a selection of these law journals relevant to the area of law attorneys practise in. As Horak (1997:43) points out, legal textbooks and law journals can be particularly useful to a legal practitioner, as they may provide comment on and discuss the latest legal developments. There is no comprehensive index to South African legal periodicals, however the Index to South African Periodicals (ISAP) is an index to all South African journals, including law journals.
- **Electronic resources** – Legal practitioners in South African have access to an increasing number of electronic resources. Legal resources in electronic format are available as CD-ROM products, or online from the publishers' websites. The full text of South African legislation and case law are available in both these electronic formats. LexisNexis Butterworths and Juta Law furthermore both produce 'libraries' on particular topics for example

Commercial law, Labour law, etc. These electronic compilations usually include relevant statutes, regulations, case law and commentaries with some including journal articles and full text electronic textbooks (Barratt & Snyman, 2002:5-6).

This researcher's review of the literature indicated that attorneys' need to keep up-to-date with new legislation and the latest court decisions are their most important information needs. Services such as Legalbrief, the Lexinfo Bulletin and the various Sibergrammes (published by Siber Ink) are tailored to provide in the current awareness needs of legal practitioners in South Africa. *Legalbrief* is a daily news diary featuring legal developments taking place in South Africa, Africa and the rest of the world. The *Lexinfo Bulletin* is published weekly, and includes references to the past week's Government Gazette notices, new legislation, journal articles and book reviews. Siber Ink publishes the *Competition Law Sibergramme*, *Environmental Law Sibergramme* and *Labour Law Sibergramme*. These Sibergrammes can be described as bulletins which include information on new legislation and the latest case law. *Legalbrief*, *Lexinfo Bulletin* and the various Sibergrammes are distributed via electronic mail to keep legal practitioners in South Africa up-to-date with the latest legal developments in South Africa.

In addition to the above-mentioned resources, legal practitioners in South Africa have access to a substantial amount of free legal information on the Internet. There are numerous websites which give access to a wealth of government information. Various websites give access to the full text of legislation (bills and acts of Parliament) from 1993 onwards. Case law is also available on the Internet free of charge as several South African courts make their judgments available in this way. These courts include the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeal as well as several Superior Courts. Some of these judgments are published on the Internet within a few hours of the judgment being delivered.

5.4 Non-legal information

Attorneys also sometimes have a need for non-legal information, including information pertaining to their clients' business. Deedsearch and SA Company Search

are available from LexisNexis Butterworths and are marketed to law libraries. Deedsearch and SA Company Search are available as Internet subscriptions. Subscribers to these databases have access to immovable property, company, close corporation and credit information, as Deedsearch provides access to the Access Information Trust Corporation (ITC) database, South African Deeds Offices databases and Companies and Intellectual Properties Registration Office (CIPRO). Deedsearch allows the user to conduct searches for information on companies and close corporations, their directors or members, the registered address of a company, auditors of a company, etc. Deedsearch furthermore allows users to access credit performance information on consumers or companies from ITC. The Deedsearch access to the South African Deeds Offices gives users access to information on property title deeds, property bonds registered, property/transfer history, etc.

A law librarian who wishes to effectively provide information to the South African attorney requires knowledge of the various sources of legal and non-legal information that attorneys require in the satisfaction of their information needs.

5.5 South African law libraries and the provision of information

Large law firms in South Africa generally have a well-stocked library and employ a permanent librarian or information professional. Smaller law firms have limited resources and often employ part-time information professionals or outsource certain aspects library services to other companies or contract workers. The type of library services which are generally outsourced in law firms, include the annotation of law reports, the updating of loose-leaf publications and legal research (Garratt, 2002:30, 31).

There appears to be no authoritative directory regarding the staffing of law libraries in South Africa. The Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), the national professional organisation, does not maintain a register of information professionals in legal organisations (Garratt, 2001:12). The Organisation of South African Law Libraries (OSALL) has been operating since 1976 and functions as a professional support network for legal information professionals concerned with the supply of information to legal practitioners in South Africa. OSALL has

approximately 120 members, representing approximately 40 South African law firms. It is unknown how many law firms in South Africa have library and information professionals who do not belong to OSALL. From responses to a salary survey conducted in 2000 it appears that roughly half the number of South African law librarians work in private law firms or in advocates' chambers, most of which are situated in the larger centres like Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. The public service employs 27% of legal librarians and academic institutions about 15%. About 7% of law librarians work in non-legal commercial enterprises. OSALL maintains effective electronic communication among members via its listserv. The listserv operates informally to provide a forum for debate issues, as a means of enlisting help with professional queries and as a means also of advertising upcoming meetings and matters of interest to the local information professionals (Garratt, 2002:30-31).

Whilst the existence of libraries in law firms appears to be prevalent, there is little information on the exact role of law librarians and libraries in the provision of information services to attorneys. Although South African attorneys clearly have access to a wealth of legal information it is not clear what the information needs of attorneys are, the extent to which the information needs of attorneys are met, which sources of information they prefer or the factors which influence their information-seeking behaviour. Whilst little has been written about the information needs of the South African attorneys, Hadassin (1982:106-107) contends that it is important for a lawyer to do fee-producing work, whilst the law librarian plays a role in the effective and efficient dissemination of the information and publications which the lawyer requires. It is a prerequisite that the law librarian should have knowledge of the sources of South African law to facilitate the effective retrieval and dissemination of legal information. Hadassin (1982:111) furthermore refers to the need for the law librarian to be able to retrieve non-legal information in fields such medicine and engineering as well as company and financial information. Hadassin (1982:111-112) also highlights the importance of current awareness as lawyers need access to up-to-date information on legal developments.

5.5.1 Research on the information needs of attorneys

Little research appears to have been undertaken on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of legal practitioners in South Africa. Lee's 1979 research into library and information services to legal practitioners in Cape Town appears to be the only in-depth research undertaken on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys in South Africa. Lee (1979:5-1) attempted to identify the information needs of legal practitioners and establish how these information needs could be satisfied. Lee's research took the form of a social survey, during which interviews were conducted using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions on the personal details of legal practitioners, formal information needs, informal information needs and information searches. Lee (1979:7-5, 7-45, 12-3) found that the majority of attorneys interviewed regarded the law library as an attorney's most important source of information. Responses indicated that most attorneys "considered their firm library to be adequate for the purposes of providing the information required for the effective practice of their profession". However legal practitioners surveyed indicated that they found the law librarian's assistance of limited value, which according to Lee (1979:12-6) was most likely due to a lack of suitably qualified librarians and legal practitioners being unaware of the advantages of employing a professional librarian. Furthermore the existence of private legal collections influenced the use of law libraries, leading to the reduced use of law libraries. With regard to informal sources of information, legal practitioners regarded informal discussions with colleagues as an important source of information. Lee (1979:7-26) furthermore found that there was a strong correlation between the level of experience of an attorney and the use of legal resources. More experienced attorneys appeared to use legal resources less. This appears to correlate to recent overseas studies, which have found that more experienced attorneys may be able to draw on their own professional knowledge to a greater extent than newly qualified attorneys.

As previously mentioned, attorneys require a vast amount of legal and non-legal information to perform their various work roles and tasks. There is clearly a wealth of legal information available in printed and electronic format in South Africa. South

African law librarians must have knowledge of the legal resources available, as it is clearly a prerequisite for the effective retrieval and dissemination of information. Little is however known about the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys in South Africa or the role of the law library in the provision of information to legal practitioners.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 6

6 Empirical survey

This chapter describes the research design of the study, the methods of data collection and discusses the questionnaire administered. The research design incorporates both a conceptual and empirical component. The former was based on information found in the literature and knowledge obtained from working in a law firm. The latter was based on an empirical study in the form of a social survey.

6.1 Survey research

According to Busha and Harter (1980:54) survey research is characterized by the selection of random samples from large and small populations to obtain empirical knowledge of a contemporary nature. This knowledge allows generalizations to be made about characteristics, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of the entire population being studied. A small proportion of the population (a sample) is usually selected and findings generalized to the larger group. Survey research is generally concerned with naturally occurring variables in natural settings and is considered to be appropriate for studying personal factors and for exploratory analysis of relationships. Survey research has been proven to be particularly useful for use and user studies (Powell, 1991:53, 54, 61, 80). This researcher's study into the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys is essentially a user study. Therefore the researcher is of the opinion that the survey research method would be the most appropriate for this study. A cross-sectional research design was used for this survey as it took place once, within a particular time span.

6.2 Survey population

The researcher surveyed the attorneys of Bowman Gilfillan, a large legal firm in South Africa. Bowman Gilfillan has approximately 210 attorneys, practising in most areas of the law and has offices in Gauteng and the Western Cape. The researcher surveyed the entire population of Bowman Gilfillan attorneys. The researcher is employed as a law librarian in the Cape Town office of Bowman Gilfillan, while two

other librarians serve one other library in Gauteng. The members of the population were readily available to the researcher, which made it easier to collect the data. Furthermore doing a survey of the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys reduced time and financial constraints.

6.3 Data collection methods

As data collection methods determine the type and quality of the data collected, the method of data collection must be selected with great care. Nicholas (1996:42) points out that the choice of data collection method should be determined by both the subject being researched as well as by the user group being investigated. Howard and Sharp (1983:122-123) draw attention to the time-consuming nature of data gathering and that gaining access to data is often a problem for the student researcher. Data should be gathered in such a manner that should the researcher or others repeat the process, it should lead to the same results (Howard & Sharp, 1983:124, 133).

Two methods of data collection, namely analysis of documentary sources and questioning were employed. The examination and analysis of documentary sources involves studying existing documents, which in this instance refers to literature on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys. Questioning is generally regarded as the most effective technique to use to establish information needs. Self-administered questionnaires and interviews are both questioning techniques. The difference between questionnaires and interviews is based on whether the researcher is present during the answering process or not. With self-administered questionnaires personal factors are largely removed from the questioning process and people are given time to consider the questions and to collect the necessary data. However, with self-administered questionnaires it is difficult to be certain that users understand the questions. Also, the response rates to self-administered questionnaires are generally low and this would possibly be particularly true where busy practitioners are concerned (Nicholas, 1996:42-47).

In order to determine the information needs of professionals, such as attorneys, people have to be questioned in-depth about their work roles and tasks. In this regard interviews allow opportunities to question and explain to the user and so obtain in-

depth data. Interviews further enable a check to be made on the validity of the answers given in questionnaires (Wood, 1969:268). However, the intrusive nature of interviews can affect respondents' answers.

The use of two or more methods of data collection is referred to as triangulation. Triangulation can enhance the validity of results as consistent findings among different data collection methods suggest that the findings are reasonably valid (Powell, 1991:84). Therefore a combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews could be the ideal in examining the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of attorneys. An overview of information needs studies by Otiike (1999:22-29) indicates that questionnaires and interviews are the most frequently used data collection methods in the study of the information needs of attorneys and other legal professionals. In considering data collection methods to gather data about the information needs of attorneys a combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews appear to have several advantages. Attorneys generally have well-developed verbal and written skills well-suited to completing self-administered questionnaires and dealing with interviews. Interviews were conducted with some attorneys after the self-administered questionnaires had been completed. The same topics were covered in the interviews, but more in-depth than the self-administered questionnaires in order to validate some of the responses.

6.4 The questionnaire

The purpose of research is to obtain valid and reliable information so that specific hypotheses can be tested or research questions answered. Care must be taken to develop the kind of questions that will accurately measure what the researcher wants to know (Busha and Harter, 1980:61). Therefore the preparation of the questionnaire entails drafting questions that will elicit the required information.

There are two basic types of questions, open-ended and fixed-response. Open-ended, or unstructured questions permit free responses from participants, while fixed-response or structured questions, also known as closed questions, limit the responses of the participant to stated alternatives (Powell, 1991:87-88). The questionnaire designed by the researcher consists of closed and open-ended questions. In order to

obtain different opinions or strength of preferences, a rating scale was used where appropriate. Questionnaires consisting of closed, fixed-response questions generally take less time to complete. Therefore the use of a questionnaire consisting mostly of closed, fixed-response questions is appropriate as attorneys work in an environment where time is money. However a number of open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire in an attempt to invite comment or suggestions and so elicit information which might otherwise not have been gathered.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information on the behaviour, attitudes and preferences of the respondents, the attorneys of Bowman Gilfillan. The researcher attempted to determine why the attorneys need information, what the information needs of the attorneys are, what type of work-related information they require, which sources of information they use and what factors are that influence the attorneys' information-seeking behaviour. The researcher also investigated the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to the attorneys. The questionnaire comprised the following four main sections.

Section 1 of the questionnaire included a number of factual questions relating to the personal data of the respondents. The researcher requested personal data such as the attorney's age, position in the firm, number of years experience as an attorney and the area of legal specialization to establish whether these factors influenced the information-seeking behaviour of the attorneys.

Section 2 of the questionnaire sought to gather data regarding the work-related information needs of the attorneys and therefore included the following questions:

- Question 2.1 sought to determine which categories of work-related information the attorneys required as well as the frequency of use and importance of the various categories of information.
- Question 2.2 attempted to determine how the attorneys kept up-to-date with the latest legal developments as well as the frequency of use and importance of the various methods and sources of keeping up-to-date.

- Question 2.3 attempted to determine the reasons why the attorneys sought information.

Section 3 of the questionnaire sought to determine which sources and systems of information the attorneys use in seeking work-related information, the frequency of use and importance of the various sources and systems of information as well as the factors influencing their use of various sources of information. Section 3 also included a question about information media preferences and therefore included the following questions:

- Question 3.1 attempted to establish the frequency of use and importance of various informal and personal information systems in relation to the formal library system.
- Question 3.2 attempted to determine the frequency of use and importance of specific library sources of information.
- Question 3.3 questioned the attorneys' use of various electronic information media in relation to traditional printed sources of information. Question 3.3 asked the respondents to comment on information media they use and prefer.
- Question 3.4 attempted to rate the level of importance of various factors that could influence the attorneys' use of sources of information.
- Question 3.5 asked the respondents to indicate who does the searching when they seek work-related information.

Section 4 of the questionnaire gathered data relating to the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to the attorneys and therefore included the following questions:

- Question 4.1 asked the attorneys' to rate the level of importance of the library's resources and services in the satisfaction of their information needs.
- Question 4.2 questioned the attorneys' perceptions with regard to the adequacy of the library's resources and services.

- Question 4.3 asked the attorneys to consider whether the level of adequacy of resources and services provided by the library impacted on their professional work.
- Question 4.4 asked the attorneys to indicate the frequency of use and rate the importance of the various methods of access to the resources and services provided by the library.
- Question 4.5 attempted to establish the frequency of use and importance rating of the various reasons for visiting the library or consulting a law librarian.
- Question 4.6 questioned the level of importance of the various attributes law librarians are expected to have.

A final open-ended question invited the respondents to make comments or suggestions which would contribute to the satisfaction of their work-related information needs. The questionnaire provided the attorneys with the option of completing the questionnaire anonymously or including their name and surname. Whether or not the attorneys identified themselves was left to individual preference in an attempt to encourage honest responses.

6.4.1 Pilot study

According to Powell (1991:99) a pilot study gives the researcher an opportunity to pre-test and evaluate the questionnaire and identify questionnaire items that tend to be misunderstood by participants. Therefore, the researcher carried out a small pilot study before the actual research took place. During the pilot study questionnaires were administered to several of the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire as they would in an actual survey. After the attorneys taking part in the pilot study completed their questionnaires they were interviewed by the researcher. Respondents were given an opportunity to point out problem questions, poor instructions, and unnecessary or missing questions, and to give their general reactions to the questionnaire. Comments by the respondents can be useful, as they allow the researcher to refine and improve the original questionnaire. As no problems were encountered in the completion of the questionnaire, no significant changes were made to the questionnaire.

Prior to the pilot study the researcher also consulted the other two Bowman Gilfillan librarians about the questionnaire. The researcher is of the opinion that the Bowman Gilfillan librarians are familiar with the subject of the questionnaire and as such could help in assessing the validity of the questions.

6.4.2 Distribution of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent to all the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys via electronic mail. The email, which included the questionnaire as a MSWord attachment, introduced and explained the purpose of the questionnaire. This researcher chose this particular means of distributing the questionnaire as it was convenient and easy to distribute the questionnaire to the target population in this manner. Electronic mail offers a way to send a survey to a respondent to answer at his or her convenience. Electronic mail distribution of questionnaires can be regarded as a relatively inexpensive method of data collection, as there is no paper or postage involved in the distribution of the questionnaire. Furthermore electronic mail is an efficient and quick way of reaching the Bowman Gilfillan attorneys in Gauteng and the Western Cape. The respondents had the option of returning the completed questionnaire by return email. The respondents could also return a completed paper copy of the survey to the researcher. To ensure a sufficient response rate the initial email to all the attorneys was followed by two emails sent at a later date to remind the attorneys to return their completed questionnaires. The emails sent as reminders once again included the questionnaire as an attached document.

Chapter 7

7 Analysis of data

In this chapter the analysis of the data gathered in the empirical survey of the information needs of the attorneys in a large South African law firm is presented. Questionnaires were distributed to the entire population (210) of Bowman Gilfillan attorneys, with respondents returning 105 completed questionnaires. This gives a response rate of 50%. Rubin & Babbie (1993:340) consider a response rate of 50 percent adequate. According to Frankort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:232) many mail surveys do not achieve a response rate larger than 50 percent. A factor that relates specifically to this study is that attorneys generally bill their clients at hourly rates and are thus inclined to be reluctant to engage in non-billable activities. The response rate of 50 percent can thus be considered satisfactory given the attorneys' lack of time and reluctance to engage in non-billable activities.

The questions included in the questionnaire that was distributed to the survey population were based on the research questions and reflect pertinent issues derived from a study of the relevant literature and from knowledge obtained while working as a law librarian in a corporate law library. As mentioned in 6.5 the questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions. A rating scale was used where appropriate to enable respondents to express their opinions or strength of preferences. Respondents were thus requested to indicate frequency of use and level of importance on a scale of 1 (not important/not used) to 4 (very important/heavily used). The majority of the questions included a general response category that made it possible for respondents to enter other relevant data and personal observations. This however did not yield any significant data and is thus not reflected in the following sections. It should be noted that response categories were conflated where deemed necessary for reporting purposes. This is in accordance with advice given by Babbie to collapse response categories to ensure adequate numbers in each category and to more easily identify patterns (Babbie, 1995:383).

All questions incorporated in the questionnaire were subjected to cross-tabulation to establish the impact of the independent or classification variables on the dependent

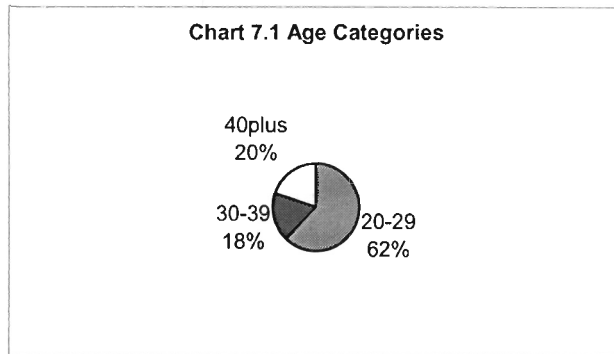
variables. The following variables were considered during cross-tabulation: respondent's age, position in the firm and number of years experience as attorney. To establish which results were significant the Pearson chi-square statistical test was applied to all bivariate relations. Results that yielded a chi-square statistic below the .01 significance level were rejected.

It should be noted that where the total percentage of responses to a particular category do not add up to a 100%, this can be attributed to missing data.

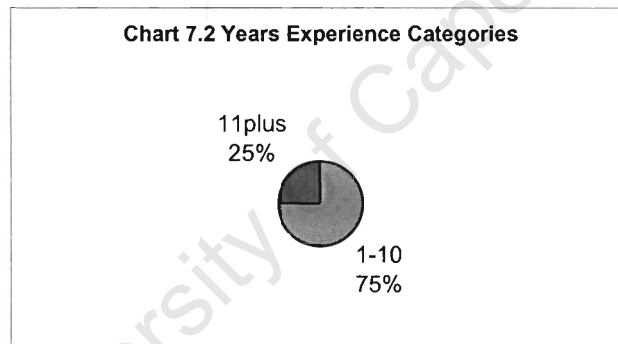
7.1 Demographic profile of study population

Section 1 of the questionnaire (Appendix A) consisted of a number of questions relating to personal data, including respondents' age, position in the law firm, number of years experience as attorney and respondent's area of legal specialization. The aforementioned demographic data was gathered to provide an overview of the study population and to provide data for cross-tabulation amongst various sub-categories of the population and their responses.

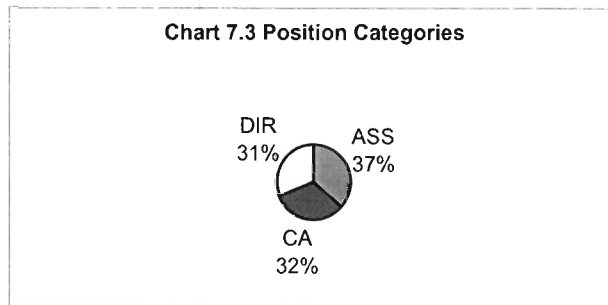
The analysis of data by age categories (Chart 7.1) shows that the largest proportion (59%) of the respondents were in the youngest age category (20-29), whilst 21% of the respondents were in the 30-39 age category. Older respondents (40plus category) formed 20% of the population. According to firm records the average age of a Bowman Gilfillan attorney is 33 years. The young average age of attorneys can be attributed to the large number of candidate attorneys the firm employs. As the average age of the respondents was also 33 years, the survey population should be regarded as representative of the Bowman Gilfillan attorney population.



The analysis of the data relating to the respondents' years of experience, as attorneys (Chart 7.2) indicates that by far the largest proportion of respondents (75%) were in the 1-10 years' experience category. There were only 25% of the respondents in the 11plus years of experience category. This result further underscores the observation made above about the age of the attorneys.



The analysis of data relating to the position of attorneys in the firm (Chart 7.3) shows that almost equal numbers of the respondents were associates (35%), candidate attorneys (33%) and directors (31%). After completing a relevant law degree at university, candidate attorneys complete their training through practical work at a law firm. After completing their practical training (which is usually for 2 years) they are admitted as attorneys and join a law firm as an associate. The possibility of becoming a director exists once they have gained the necessary experience as a practising attorney and have spent a considerable time at a firm and meet certain other criteria established by the law firm.



The respondents were finally asked to indicate their area of legal specialization. From the responses obtained, the researcher identified six areas of legal specialization and a seventh category of respondents, the candidate attorneys, who do not specialize in a specific field of law as they are expected to gain experience in all areas of the law. Data analysis indicated that the largest proportion of the respondents (33%) did not specialize in a specific field of the law. A further 29% of the respondents specialized in corporate law, 11% in employment law, 10% in litigation, 9% in intellectual property law, 5% in real estate and conveyancing and 3% in maritime law. The number of areas of legal specialization suggests the comprehensiveness of the areas of law Bowman Gilfillan practises in. This variation in legal specialization however precluded the researcher from using this variable to obtain significant cross tabulations.

7.2 Attorneys' work-related information needs

In section 2 of the questionnaire (Appendix A) the researcher sought to establish why the attorneys need work-related information, what type of information they use in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs and which methods and sources they use to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments.

7.2.1 The categories of information that attorneys need

The respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of use and also to rate the importance of the various categories of work-related information they require (Question 2.1, Appendix A). The categories of information included legislation (bills, acts and subordinate legislation such as regulations), case law (law reports and unreported judgments), legal practice and procedure (e.g. civil procedure in the

courts), forms and precedents, legal opinions, non-legal information (e.g. information about a client's business), marketing information, information on seminars and conferences and information on experts in different areas of the law.

The analysis of data in Table 7.1 below indicates that legislation (92%) is by far the category of information used most often, followed by case law (78%). Legal practice and procedure (51%), forms and precedents and legal opinions (50% each) were the next most often used categories. Respondents indicated that they made far less use of non-legal information (39%), information on experts (24%), information on conferences and seminars (18%), and marketing information (10%).

TABLE 7.1 INFORMATION CATEGORIES – FREQUENCY OF USE		
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
LEGISLATION	8%	92%
CASE LAW	22%	78%
LEGAL PRACTICE & PROCEDURE	48%	51%
FORMS & PRECEDENTS	47%	50%
LEGAL OPINIONS	49%	50%
NON-LEGAL INFORMATION	58%	39%
INFORMATION ON EXPERTS	75%	24%
INFORMATION ON CONFERENCES	80%	18%
MARKETING INFORMATION	90%	10%

The analysis of the respondents' importance rating (Table 7.2) of the above categories shows that once again as in use, legislation (97%) and case law (93%) were regarded as the most important categories of information. Legal opinions (71%), forms and precedents (70%), legal practice and procedure (67%) and non-legal information (53%) were also given a high importance rating. It can however be seen that information on experts (35%), information on conferences and seminars (31%) and marketing information (18%) was not rated highly. It can be seen from Table 7.2 that the level of importance of the various categories of information was generally rated higher than the frequency of use. This was particularly so in the case of forms and precedents and legal opinions.

TABLE 7.2 INFORMATION CATEGORIES – LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
LEGISLATION	3%	97%
CASE LAW	7%	93%
LEGAL OPINIONS	26%	71%
FORMS & PRECEDENTS	27%	70%
LEGAL PRACTICE & PROCEDURE	30%	67%
NON-LEGAL INFORMATION	42%	53%
INFORMATION ON EXPERTS	61%	35%
INFORMATION ON CONFERENCES	67%	31%
MARKETING INFORMATION	78%	18%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.3:

TABLE 7.3 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 2.1 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	AGE			
	20-29	30-39	40plus	All
Legislation: frequency rating	97%	95%	76%	92%
	YEARS EXPERIENCE			
	1-10	11plus	All	
Forms & precedents: frequency rating	58%	27%	50%	
Non-legal information: importance rating	62%	27%	53%	
Conference information: importance rating	37%	15%	31%	

From Table 7.3 above it can be seen that :

- Age and frequency of use of legislation: The younger respondents (20-29 and 30-39 age categories) use legislation far more frequently than the older respondents (97% and 95% respectively vs 76%).
- Years of experience and frequency of use of forms and precedents: The respondents with the least number of years of experience (1-10 years) used this resource more frequently than those working 11plus years (58% vs 27%).
- Years' experience and importance of non-legal information: Respondents with 1-10 years' work experience (62%) rated non-legal information far more important than respondents with more than 10 years experience (27%).

- Years' experience and importance of seminars and conferences: Respondents with the least number of years experience rated information on conferences more important than respondents with more than 10 years work experience (37% vs 15%).

7.2.2 Attorneys' current awareness needs

Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of use and rate the level of importance of various methods and sources of keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments (Question 2.2, Appendix A). Sources that were listed included Current law, law journals and law reports, Legalbrief (a daily news diary featuring legal developments taking place in South Africa and the rest of the world), the library bulletin, and newspapers. The library bulletin, compiled by the Bowman Gilfillan librarians, is circulated to attorneys on a weekly basis and includes references to Government Gazette notices, new legislation, journal articles and book reviews. Respondents were also asked to rate attending conferences and seminars and discussions with legal professionals as methods of keeping up-to-date.

The analysis of the data in Table 7.4 below indicates that respondents most often keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments through discussions with other legal professionals (78%). The next most frequently used methods were to read law journals and reports (70%), Legalbrief (69%), newspapers (61%) and Current law (60%). Consultation of the library bulletin (33%) and attendance of conferences and seminars (12%) obtained far fewer responses as a method of keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments.

TABLE 7.4 CURRENT AWARENESS - FREQUENCY OF USE		
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
DISCUSSIONS WITH LEGAL PROFESSIONALS	20%	78%
LAW JOURNALS & REPORTS	29%	70%
LEGALBRIEF	30%	69%
CURRENT LAW (LAWSA)	38%	60%
NEWSPAPERS	38%	61%
LIBRARY BULLETIN	65%	33%
ATTEND CONFERENCES	87%	12%

The analysis of data in Table 7.5 below indicates that respondents not only most often keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments through discussions with other legal professionals, they also rated these discussions as their most important method of keeping up-to-date (89%). Reading law journals and reports (83%) and Current law (70%) were also highly rated as current awareness methods. Legalbrief (57%), conferences and seminars (57%), newspapers (56%) and the library bulletin (50%) although still rated as important by the majority of respondents attracted less support than the first three categories. Level of importance was once again generally rated higher than frequency of use, with the attendance of conferences and seminars (57%) receiving a significantly higher value rating than frequency of use. Newspapers were rated at a slightly lower importance level than their frequency of use rating.

TABLE 7.5 CURRENT AWARENESS - LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
DISCUSSIONS WITH LEGAL PROFESSIONALS	7%	89%
LAW JOURNALS & REPORTS	13%	83%
CURRENT LAW	28%	70%
ATTEND CONFERENCES	37%	57%
LEGALBRIEF	39%	57%
NEWSPAPERS	41%	56%
LIBRARY BULLETIN	46%	50%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.6.

TABLE 7.6 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 2.2 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	POSITION			
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	All
Library bulletin: frequency rating	48%	39%	12%	33%
Conference attendance: importance rating	39%	63%	68%	57%

From Table 7.6 above it can be seen that:

- Position and frequency of use of library bulletin: Candidate attorneys (12%) referred to the library bulletin less frequently than the associates (39%) and directors (48%).

- Position and importance of conference attendance: Candidate attorneys and associates rated the attendance of conferences and seminars almost equally important (68% and 63% respectively), however only 39% of the directors rated the attendance of conferences and seminars an important method of keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments.

7.2.3 The reasons why attorneys need information

Question 2.3 (Appendix A), an open-ended question, was included to solicit information on the reasons why attorneys require work-related information. Analysis of the responses to this question and data gathered during follow-up interviews indicated that the vast majority of respondents regarded information to establish the current status of the law and to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments as their most important information needs. The majority of respondents further indicated that the reason why they have these requirements is to establish the rights and obligations of clients, the prospect of success in defending or proceeding with potential litigation and generally to advise clients.

A significant number of respondents indicated that they also require information to assist in the creation of formal documents, such as agreements, contracts, court documents and legal opinions that they draft to advise clients. Respondents furthermore indicated that they need appropriate information to ensure compliance with procedural requirements, such as when concluding a property transaction. A few respondents also indicated a need for information to write newspaper or journal articles, to present lectures, for academic study and to expand their general knowledge and knowledge of the law. The data gathered also suggested a need for non-legal information as a number of respondents indicated that they often have to find out more about a client's business and to research the market in which the client operates. Cross tabulations were not feasible in that the data gathered was essentially qualitative by nature.

7.3 Sources and systems that contain the information attorneys need

In section 3 of the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of use and also indicate the level of importance of various formal and informal systems containing information, specific recorded sources of information as well as their use of various information media. The researcher also asked questions relating to the factors influencing the use of a source of information. Finally, the researcher asked respondents to indicate who would do the searching when respondents seek work-related information.

7.3.1 The library in relation to personal and informal sources of information

Question 3.1 (Appendix A) tried to establish the respondents' relative use and rating of informal and personal information systems in relation to the formal library system. They were thus asked to indicate which of the following they used most frequently and rated the most highly: colleagues (attorneys) within the firm, legal professionals outside the firm, non-legal professionals, their personal collection, and the law librarians and library.

Table 7.7 below, outlines the respondents' use of the various sources and systems of information. The analysis of the data indicated that the respondents referred to their colleagues (86%) most often, followed by the law librarians and library (75%). Personal information collections (59%) although used by the majority was used far less frequently. It would appear that attorneys do not often consult other legal professionals (24%) or non-legal professionals (16%) to obtain work-related information.

	TABLE 7.7 SOURCES OF INFORMATION - FREQUENCY OF USE	
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
COLLEAGUES (ATTORNEYS WITHIN THE FIRM)	14%	86%
LAW LIBRARIAN / LIBRARY	24%	75%
PERSONAL COLLECTION	38%	59%
LEGAL PROFESSIONALS OUTSIDE THE FIRM	76%	24%
NON-LEGAL PROFESSIONALS	83%	16%

When the importance attributed to the above-mentioned sources was analysed it was found that respondents rated consulting their colleagues within the law firm and the law librarian and library equally highly (92% each). Respondents' personal collection (65%) was also given a fairly high rating as an important source of information. Other legal professionals (39%) and non-legal professionals (25%) were not highly rated as sources of information. According to these results importance was once again generally rated higher than use. It is interesting to note that a significantly higher value rating was given to the law librarian and library in contrast to their use rating.

TABLE 7.8 SOURCES OF INFORMATION - LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
LAW LIBRARIAN / LIBRARY	6%	92%
COLLEAGUES (ATTORNEYS WITHIN THE FIRM)	7%	92%
PERSONAL COLLECTION	30%	65%
LEGAL PROFESSIONALS	60%	39%
NON-LEGAL PROFESSIONALS	70%	25%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.9.

TABLE 7.9 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 3.1 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	POSITION			
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	All
Law librarian / library: frequency rating	55%	76%	94%	75%
	YEARS EXPERIENCE			
	1-10	11plus	All	
Law librarian / library: frequency rating	84%	50%	75%	

From Table 7.9 above it can be seen that:

- Position and frequency of use of law librarian / library: Far more candidate attorneys (94%) referred to the law librarians and library than associates (76%), who in turn used this resource more than the directors (55%).
- Years' experience and frequency of use of law librarian / library: Far more respondents in the 1-10 years category of experience referred to the law

librarians and library (84%), than the 50% of respondents in the 11plus years experience category who referred to the law librarians and library.

7.3.2 The use of library resources

Question 3.2 (Appendix A) questioned the respondents on their frequency of use and importance of various recorded sources of information held by the firm's libraries, such as law reports, bills, acts and regulations, forms and precedents, legal opinions, Government Gazettes, loose-leaf publications, textbooks, legal dictionaries, law journals, law directories and newspapers. Question 2.1 (Appendix A) asked the respondents to indicate the frequency of use and rate the importance of various categories of information.

Table 7.10 below illustrates the respondents' frequency of use of the various published sources of information and it can be seen that the most frequently used sources of information were bills, acts and regulations (89%), followed by textbooks (85%), law reports (75%) and loose-leaf publications (71%). It is further clear that more than half of the respondents indicated that they often refer to forms and precedents (53%). Legal opinions, newspapers (48% each), Government Gazettes (40%), law dictionaries (28%) and law directories (20%) were referred to less frequently.

TABLE 7.10 SPECIFIC SOURCES OF INFORMATION - FREQUENCY OF USE		
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
BILLS, ACTS, REGULATIONS, ETC.	10%	89%
BOOKS	15%	85%
LAW REPORTS	25%	75%
LOOSE-LEAF PUBLICATIONS	28%	71%
FORMS & PRECEDENTS	47%	53%
NEWSPAPERS	50%	48%
LAW JOURNALS	51%	46%
LEGAL OPINIONS	51%	48%
GOVERNMENT GAZETTES	59%	40%
LEGAL DICTIONARIES	71%	28%
LAW DIRECTORIES	78%	20%

An examination of the importance attributed to these publications show, as illustrated in Table 7.11 below, that they also rated bills, acts and regulations as their most

important published sources of information (94%), followed by law reports and textbooks (90% each) and loose-leaf publications (82%). Although less highly rated, forms and precedents (70%), legal opinions (68%), law journals (65%), government gazettes (64%) and newspapers (50%) were all rated as important by the majority of the respondents. Legal dictionaries (44%) and law directories (33%) were not highly rated as important sources of information. It is interesting to note that respondents once again generally rated the importance of the various sources of information higher than the use they made of them. This was particularly true for government gazettes and legal opinions, which were given a significantly higher importance rating than frequency of use.

**TABLE 7.11 RECORDED SOURCES OF INFORMATION –
LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE**

	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
BILLS, ACTS, REGULATIONS, ETC.	4%	94%
TEXTBOOKS	8%	90%
LAW REPORTS	9%	90%
LOOSE-LEAF PUBLICATIONS	16%	82%
LEGAL OPINIONS	28%	70%
FORMS & PRECEDENTS	31%	68%
LAW JOURNALS	31%	65%
GOVERNMENT GAZETTES	33%	64%
NEWSPAPERS	48%	50%
LEGAL DICTIONARIES	54%	44%
LAW DIRECTORIES	64%	33%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.12.

TABLE 7.12 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 3.2
(p level \leq .01)

	AGE			All
	20-29	30-39	40plus	
Law directories: frequency rating	29%	14%	0%	20%
Legislation: importance rating	100%	82%	90%	94%
Law directories: importance rating	47%	27%	0%	33%
POSITION				
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	All
Law directories: importance rating	9%	39%	50%	33%
YEARS EXPERIENCE				
	1-10	11plus	All	
Law directories: importance rating	42%	8%	33%	

From Table 7.12 above it can be seen that:

- Age and frequency of use of law directories: Far more (29%) respondents in the youngest age category (20-29) indicated that they often refer to law directories, than those in the 30-39 age category (14%), while attorneys in the 40plus age category did not refer to law directories at all.
- Age and the importance of bills, acts and regulations: All the respondents (100%) in the youngest age category (20-29) rated bills, acts and regulations important, however fewer respondents in the older age categories (30-39 and 40 plus) rated bills, acts and regulations important (82% and 90% respectively).
- Age and importance of law directories: More respondents in the youngest age category (20-29) regarded law directories an important source of information, than respondents in the 30-39 age category (47% and 27% respectively), while none of the respondents in the 40plus category rated law directories an important source of information.
- Position and importance of law directories: Far more candidate attorneys than associates rated law directories an important source of information (50% vs 39%). Very few directors (9%) rated law directories an important source of information.

- Years' experience and importance of law directories: Far more respondents with 1-10 years experience rated law directories an important source of information than respondents in the 11plus years of experience category (42% vs 8%).

7.3.3 Use of various electronic sources in relation to printed sources

Question 3.3 (Appendix A) asked the respondents' to indicate their frequency of use and to rate the level of importance of various electronic information media (CD-ROM's, the Bowman Gilfillan Intranet and the Internet) in relation to traditional printed sources of information. All Bowman Gilfillan attorneys have access to a variety of electronic products, all of which are accessible via the attorneys' desktop PC's. The various electronic media that the attorneys have access to include a number of fee-based Internet databases. The Bowman Gilfillan Intranet also hosts various databases, including LexisNexis, the Butterworths database for law libraries. These databases contain legislation, case law, textbooks and law journals in electronic format. Attorneys also have access to an extensive CD-ROM collection as the two Bowman Gilfillan libraries both subscribe to a number of Juta Law CD-ROM databases. These databases include for example the full-text of the South African Law Reports (SALR), the major series of law reports in South Africa.

Table 7.13 below shows that the respondents rated the frequency of use of the above-mentioned information media in the following ranked order: CD-ROM's (78%), print sources of information (77%), the Internet and Intranet (68% each). Table 7.14 below shows that as in use, respondents rated CD-ROM's (90%) as the most important source of information. This was followed by the Intranet and print information media (87% each), and the Internet (83%). Respondents once again rated the importance of the various information media significantly higher than their use of the sources, with a much higher importance rating given to the Intranet.

TABLE 7.13 INFORMATION MEDIA - FREQUENCY OF USE		
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
CD-ROMS	21%	78%
PRINTED SOURCES OF INFORMATION	20%	77%
INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS	31%	68%
INTRANET	30%	68%

TABLE 7.14 INFORMATION MEDIA – LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
CD-ROMS	8%	90%
INTRANET	9%	87%
PRINTED SOURCES OF INFORMATION	8%	87%
INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS	13%	83%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Tables 7.15, 7.16 and 7.17 below.

TABLE 7.15 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 3.3 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	AGE			
	20-29	30-39	40plus	All
Internet subscriptions: frequency rating	81%	59%	38%	68%
Intranet: frequency rating	84%	55%	33%	68%
CD-ROM's: frequency rating	100%	64%	29%	78%
CD-ROM's: Importance rating	100%	77%	71%	90%

From Table 7.15 above it can be seen that:

- Age and the frequency of use of Internet subscriptions: The vast majority of respondents (81%) in the youngest age category (20-29) used Internet subscriptions often, however significantly fewer respondents in the 30-39 (59%) and even fewer respondents in the 40plus age category (38%) made frequent use of fee-based Internet databases.
- Age and the frequency of use of the Intranet: The vast majority of respondents (84%) in the youngest age category (20-29) often use the Intranet, however far fewer respondents in 30-39 and 40plus age categories (55% and 33% respectively) made frequent use of the Intranet.

- Age and the frequency of use of CD-ROM's: All respondents (100%) in the youngest age category (20-29) frequently used CD-ROM's, however fewer respondents in the 30-39 age category and even less respondents in the 40plus age category used CD-ROM's frequently (64% and 29% respectively).
- Age and the importance of CD-ROM's: All the respondents (100%) in the 20-29 age category rated this information media highly, whereas, respondents in the older age categories, 30-39 and 40plus, returned a lower importance rating for CD-ROM's (77% and 71% respectively).

TABLE 7.16 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 3.3 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	POSITION			
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	All
Internet subscriptions: frequency rating	36%	84%	79%	68%
Intranet: frequency rating	33%	87%	79%	68%
CD-ROM's: frequency rating	33%	97%	100%	78%
CD-ROM's: importance rating	73%	95%	100%	90%

From Table 7.16 above it can be seen that:

- Position and the frequency of use of Internet subscriptions: Associates used Internet subscriptions the most frequently (84%), followed by the candidate attorneys (79%), while the directors (36%) made far less use of Internet subscriptions.
- Position and frequency of use of the Intranet: Associates also used the Intranet most often (87%), followed by the candidate attorneys (79%), and once again the directors (33%) appeared to use the Intranet the least.
- Position and frequency of use of CD-ROM's: All candidate attorneys (100%) and the overwhelming majority of associates (97%) used CD-ROM's frequently. Directors (33%) once again made the least use of the CD-ROM's.
- Position and the importance of CD-ROM's: All candidate attorneys (100%) also rated CD-ROM's important, followed closely by the associates (95%) and the directors (73%) once again made the least use of the CD-ROM's.

TABLE 7.17 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 3.3
(p level ≤ .01)

	YEARS EXPERIENCE		
	1-10	11plus	All
Internet subscriptions:			
frequency rating	76%	42%	68%
Intranet:			
Frequency rating	80%	31%	68%
CD-ROMS:			
Frequency rating	94%	31%	78%
Intranet:			
importance rating	94%	65%	87%
CD-ROMS:			
importance rating	97%	65%	90%

From Table 7.17 above it can be seen that:

- Years' experience and the frequency of use of Internet subscriptions: Respondents with the least number of years experience (1-10 years) used Internet subscriptions most often, whilst only 42% of respondents in the 11plus years experience category used Internet subscriptions often.
- Years' experience and the frequency of use of the Intranet: The vast majority of respondents with the least number of years experience (1-10 years) also used the Intranet most often. Far fewer respondents in the 11plus years experience category used the Intranet often (80% vs 31% respectively).
- Years' experience and the frequency of use of CD-ROM's: Once again the majority of respondents (94%) in the 1-10 years experience category used CD-ROM's most often, whilst far fewer respondents (31%) in the 11plus years experience category used CD-ROM's often.
- Years' experience and the importance of the Intranet: The vast majority of respondents in the 1-10 years experience (94%) category rated the Intranet an important source of information, with notably fewer respondents (65%) in the 11plus category rating the Intranet an important source of information.
- Years' experience and the importance of the CD-ROM's: Once again the vast majority of respondents (97%) with the least number of years' experience (1-10 years) rated CD-ROM's important, whilst 65% of respondents in the 11plus years' experience category rated CD-ROM's important.

7.3.4 Respondents' comments on the use of various electronic sources

The respondents were given an opportunity to comment on their use and preference of the various information media (print and electronic) to solicit further explanatory information. The comments received were also confirmed during follow-up interviews with respondents. In response to question 3.3 (Appendix A) respondents indicated that they rated an electronic source of information, CD-ROM's the most frequently used and important source of information. The significant results of further bivariate analysis (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) indicated that the younger (20-29 and 30-39) and less experienced respondents (1-10 years) appeared to use the various electronic sources more often than the older, more experienced respondents. However, the frequency rating of printed sources of information was only slightly less than the frequency rating of CD-ROM's (78% vs 77%). As such printed sources of information were also highly rated with some respondents indicating that the print medium is easier to read and use and for that reason they preferred the printed medium.

According to the respondents the use of electronic resources has several advantages. These advantages include fast access to information and easier retrieval of information due to the search capabilities of electronic resources. Another advantage of electronic media is the ability to easily incorporate information that is in electronic form into a current work document by copying and pasting relevant sections of information from the electronic document. Finally respondents indicated that electronic access to information via their desktop PC saved time as it obviated a physical visit to the library. However the respondents also commented on the possible disadvantages involved in using electronic information media. A few respondents indicated that they did not consider electronic sources of information user-friendly, as it is cumbersome to scroll through digital text whilst reading. They further indicated that a lack of knowledge of electronic information media is often the reason why they do not make use of electronic sources of information. This highlights the need for training in the use of the various electronic sources of information.

7.3.5 Factors influencing the use of sources of information

Question 3.4 (Appendix A) asked respondents to rate the level of importance of various factors that could influence their use of sources of information. They were therefore asked to consider if the following factors influenced their use of a source of information: familiarity with a specific source of information, quick and easy access, currency, accuracy, completeness, format (printed or electronic) and the cost of the information.

Table 7.18 below shows that the following factors were regarded as the most significant and rated in almost equal proportions: quick and easy access and accuracy (99% each), familiarity and currency (96% each) and completeness (94%). Format (67%) was rated far less important and cost (25%) even less so. Cost is not likely to influence attorneys' use of a source of information in a large law firm, quite possibly because no direct cost is incurred by individual attorneys. It is also clear that respondents rate quick and easy access and the accuracy, familiarity, currency and completeness of information far more important than format.

TABLE 7.18 FACTORS INFLUENCING INFORMATION SOURCE USE – LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
QUICK & EASY ACCESS	1%	99%
ACCURACY	0%	99%
FAMILIARITY	4%	96%
CURRENCY	2%	96%
COMPLETENESS	5%	94%
FORMAT (ELECTRONIC OR PRINT)	31%	67%
COST	73%	25%

7.4 Legal research

Question 3.5 (Appendix A) asked respondents to indicate who does the searching when they seek work-related information.

Data analysis (Table 7.19) indicated that 98% of respondents primarily do their own legal research. Further analysis indicated that whilst all associates and candidate attorneys do their own legal research fewer directors (94%) do their own legal

research. The data analysis also gave an indication of the extent to which respondents consulted their colleagues (other attorneys within the firm) when engaged in legal research. Directors frequently consult their colleagues, referring to associates 60% of the instances and candidate attorneys in 67% of the instances when engaged in legal research. Associates consult other associates 11% of the time and candidate attorneys 54% of the instances during legal research. It would appear that candidate attorneys do not consult their colleagues as often during legal research as associates and directors do. Candidate attorneys consult their colleagues (other candidate attorneys) 14% of the time when conducting legal research. An interesting result was that candidate attorneys, associates and directors consult law librarians almost equally (46%, 43% and 45% respectively). Therefore it would appear as if the attorneys' position in the firm did not influence whether they consulted the law librarian.

TABLE 7.19 ATTORNEYS AND LEGAL RESEARCH				
POSITION	YOURSELF	ASSOCIATES	CANDIDATE ATTORNEYS	LIBRARIAN
CANDIDATE ATTORNEYS	100%	0%	14%	44%
ASSOCIATES	100%	11%	54%	43%
DIRECTORS	94%	60%	67%	45%

7.5 The role of the law library and librarian in the provision of work-related information

Section 4 of the questionnaire (Appendix A) questions the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of information to attorneys.

7.5.1 Importance of library resources and services

Question 4.1 (Appendix A) asked respondents to rate the importance of the resources and services provided by the library in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs. The overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) rated the Bowman Gilfillan libraries as very important in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs. Only 4% of respondents rated the library not important in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs.

Respondents were further asked to rate the level of service provided by the Bowman Gilfillan libraries (Question 4.2, Appendix A). Table 7.20 below indicates that the resources of the libraries were rated excellent by 52% of respondents and adequate by a further 45% of respondents. Only 1% of respondents indicated that they considered the resources of the libraries inadequate. The services, in turn, were highly rated with 70% of respondents giving a rating of excellent, and 27% rating the services adequate. None of the respondents rated the services of the libraries inadequate.

TABLE 7.20 LIBRARY RESOURCES & SERVICES			
	INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE	EXCELLENT
RESOURCES	1%	45%	52%
SERVICES	0%	27%	70%

An open-ended question, invited respondents to comment how and to what extent the possible inadequacy of the resources and services of the library affected their professional work (Question 4.3, Appendix A). A number of the respondents commented on the possible effect of inadequate resources and the majority were of the opinion that a lack of relevant resources has the potential to delay their flow of work as they would have to wait until the required resource had been located from another library or organisation. One respondent commented that a lack of relevant resources could have severe cost implications due to the time-delays.

7.5.2 Method of accessing library resources

Question 4.4 (Appendix A) asked respondents to indicate their most frequent and important method that they used to access the resources and services provided by the library. The methods included desktop access to the library's resources, visiting the library, consulting the librarian, and accessing the library's electronic catalogue.

The analysis of data as illustrated in Table 7.21 below, indicates that the respondents (79%) most often use their desktop PC's to access the library's resources, followed by a personal visit to the library (66%) and consulting a librarian (60%). Only 25% of the respondents often consulted the library's catalogue.

TABLE 7.21 ACCESS TO LIBRARY RESOURCES – FREQUENCY OF USE		
	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
PC ACCESS TO INFORMATION	19%	79%
VISIT LIBRARY	33%	66%
ASK LIBRARIAN	39%	60%
ACCESS LIBRARY CATALOGUE	72%	25%

Data analysis also indicated that respondents rate access by means of their desktop PC (88%) as the most important method of access to the resources of the libraries. Visiting the library and consulting the librarian were rated almost equally important (86% and 85% respectively). Only 50% of respondents rated the library catalogue an important tool to access the resources of the libraries. It must be noted that respondents once again rated the level of importance significantly higher than the frequency of use. This was particularly true when the significantly higher rating of visiting the library, consulting the librarian and access to the library catalogue is considered.

TABLE 7.22 ACCESS TO LIBRARY RESOURCES – LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
PC ACCESS TO INFORMATION	9%	88%
VISIT LIBRARY	11%	86%
ASK LIBRARIAN	13%	85%
ACCESS LIBRARY CATALOGUE	47%	50%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.23.

TABLE 7.23 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 4.4
(p level ≤ .01)

	AGE			
	20-29	30-39	40plus	All
Desktop PC: frequency rating	97%	77%	29%	79%
Desktop PC: importance rating	97%	95%	52%	88%
	POSITION			
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	All
Desktop PC: frequency rating	39%	100%	94%	79%
Desktop PC: importance rating	70%	95%	97%	88%
	YEARS EXPERIENCE			
	1-10	11plus	All	
Desktop PC: frequency rating	94%	35%	79%	
Desktop PC: importance rating	97%	58%	88%	

From Table 7.23 above it can be seen that:

- Age and the frequency of use of desktop PC's: Respondents (97%) in the youngest age category (20-29) most often use their desktop PC's to access the library's resources. Fewer respondents (77%) in the 30-39 age category and only 29% of respondents in the 40plus category often use their desktop PC's to access the library's resources.
- Age and the importance of desktop PC's: Respondents in the younger age categories (20-29 and 30-39) rated desktop PC access almost equally important (97% and 95% respectively). Significantly fewer respondents (52%) in the 40plus category rate their desktop PC an important method of access to the resources of the library.
- Position and the frequency of use of desktop PC's: All the associates (100%) and 94% of candidate attorneys often use their desktop PC to access the library's resources. However only 39% of directors use their desktop PC to access the resources of the library.

- Position and the importance of desktop PC's: Candidate attorneys and associates rate access by means of their desktop PC almost equally important (97% and 95% respectively). However fewer directors (70%) rated their desktop PC's an important tool to access to the resources of the library.
- Years' experience and the frequency of use of desktop PC's: The vast majority of respondents (94%) in the 1-10 years' experience use their desktop PC's to access the library resources, whilst only 35% of respondents in the 11plus years' experience category use their desktop PC's often to access the resources of the library.
- Years' experience and the importance of desktop PC's: Nearly all (97%) the respondents with the least number of years' experience (1-10 years) experience category rated desktop PC access to library resources important and 58% of respondents in the 11plus years' experience category rated desktop PC access to library resources important.

7.5.3 The law library and the provision of information

Question 4.5 (Appendix A) was included to solicit information on the purpose for which respondents use the library or consult a law librarian. Therefore this question required of respondents to consider how often they use the library or consult a librarian to locate a specific publication, find specific information, find a few "good" journal / magazine articles, do legal research or keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments. Respondents were also asked to rate the level of importance of the above-mentioned activities.

The analysis of data, as illustrated in Table 7.24 below indicates that respondents (79%) most often used the library or consulted a librarian to find specific information. Respondents also often used the library or consulted the librarian to find a specific publication (71%) or do legal research (56%). However respondents indicated that they did not often use the library or consult the librarian to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments (39%) or to find journal articles (30%).

**TABLE 7.24 PURPOSE OF CONSULTING LIBRARY –
FREQUENCY OF USE**

	NOT OFTEN	OFTEN
FIND SPECIFIC INFORMATION	18%	79%
LOCATE & CONSULT SPECIFIC PUBLICATIONS	25%	71%
DO LEGAL RESEARCH	39%	56%
KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS	57%	39%
FIND A FEW "GOOD" ARTICLES	67%	30%

Data analysis indicated that the most important use of the library was to find specific information (92%) and locate a specific publication (90%). Doing legal research (73%) and keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments (64%) was rated less important. Finding a few “good” articles (48%) obtained a much lower rating. Respondents once again rated the level of importance higher than the frequency of use. The significantly higher importance rating keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments received suggests a much higher level of importance than frequency of use indicates.

**TABLE 7.25 PURPOSE OF CONSULTING LIBRARY –
LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE**

	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
FIND SPECIFIC INFORMATION	4%	92%
LOCATE & CONSULT SPECIFIC PUBLICATIONS	7%	90%
DO LEGAL RESEARCH	21%	73%
KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS	31%	64%
FIND A FEW "GOOD" ARTICLES	48%	48%

7.5.4 Attributes of a law librarian

Question 4.6 (Appendix A) required of respondents to rate the level of importance of the following attributes of law librarians: knowledge of the law, knowledge of information sources (print and electronic), electronic searching skills, legal research skills, the ability to assist users with legal research, the ability to train users in the use of legal resources in print and electronic format, an understanding of specific areas of the law and keeping attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments. The above-mentioned attributes are part of the competencies for librarianship as defined by the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) and were identified during the literature review (cf. 4.3).

The analysis of respondents' importance rating in Table 7.26 below shows that knowledge of information sources (99%) and electronic searching skills (97%) were rated very highly. Respondents also rated the law librarian's ability to assist users with legal research, legal research skills, the ability to keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments (88% each) and the ability to provide training in the use of legal resources (print and electronic) (84%) highly. The law librarian's knowledge of the law (52%) was rated less important. Understanding of the law (35%) was not rated highly.

TABLE 7.26 LAW LIBRARIANS' ATTRIBUTES – LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE		
	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT
KNOWLEDGE OF INFORMATION SOURCES	0%	99%
ELECTRONIC RESEARCH SKILLS	2%	97%
LEGAL RESEARCH SKILLS	11%	88%
ASSIST USERS WITH LEGAL RESEARCH	11%	88%
KEEP ATTORNEYS UP-TO-DATE WITH LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS	10%	88%
PROVIDE TRAINING	15%	84%
KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW	47%	52%
UNDERSTAND THE LAW	63%	35%

This data was further analysed by means of bivariate analysis and the significant results (chi square statistic at a p level of ≤ 0.01) are outlined in Table 7.27.

TABLE 7.27 SIGNIFICANT CROSS TABULATIONS FOR QUESTION 4.6 (p level $\leq .01$)				
	POSITION			All
	Directors	Associates	Candidate attorneys	
Legal research: importance rating	73%	100%	88%	88%

From Table 7.27 above it can be seen that:

- Position and the importance of the law librarian's legal research skills: More associates and candidate attorneys than directors rated the law librarian's legal research skills important (41% and 33% respectively vs 26%).

The data analysed in this chapter are interpreted and a conclusion reached in chapter eight.

Chapter 8

8 Conclusion and recommendations

This researcher examined the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of a particular group of information users, namely the attorneys of Bowman Gilfillan, a large South African law firm. The researcher investigated why the attorneys need work-related information, what type of work-related information they require, which sources and systems of information they use and what the factors are that influence their information-seeking behaviour. As a law librarian, the researcher also investigated the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to the attorneys.

8.1 Attorneys' work-related information needs

As mentioned in 3.1, the provision of various types of services or expertise to their clients is the primary activity shared by all professionals, including attorneys. Attorneys' most important role is as their client's legal representative and to be able to provide a legal service to their clients, attorneys require information. The respondents indicated that they require information to establish the current status of the law and to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments, specifically new legislation and the latest court decisions. As mentioned in 3.3 new legislation often takes immediate effect and can therefore have immediate consequences for the clients of attorneys. The respondents furthermore indicated that they require information to establish the rights and obligations of their clients, the prospect of success in defending or proceeding with potential litigation and generally to advise their clients (cf. 7.2.3).

It follows that the respondents rated legislation and case law, the categories of information that they used most often and regard most important in the satisfaction of their information needs (cf. 7.2.1). The respondents also used various other categories of information, including legal practice and procedure, forms and precedents and legal opinions. However non-legal information, including information on experts, conferences and marketing was not highly rated. Interestingly several categories of information including legislation, forms and precedents and non-legal information

were used more frequently and rated more important by the younger and less experienced respondents. This finding suggests that the less experienced and junior attorneys have a greater need to refer to sources of information and correlates with the various studies that indicate that more experienced and older attorneys are able to draw on their own professional knowledge and experiences to a greater extent than younger and less experienced attorneys and as such have less of a need to consult various sources and systems of information (cf. also 3.2).

It is clear that the attorneys regarded establishing the current status of the law and keeping up-to-date with the latest legal developments as their most important information needs. The respondents indicated that they most often kept up-to-date with the latest legal developments through discussions with other legal professionals and that they rated these discussions their most important method of keeping up-to-date. As such, attorneys rated their colleagues more highly than various recorded sources of information, including law journals and law reports, etc.

8.2 Sources and systems that contain the information attorneys need

Rating the library in relation to personal and informal sources of information respondents' once again indicated that they referred to their colleagues (other attorneys) most often, followed by the law librarian and library. Interestingly a significantly higher importance rating was given to the law librarian and library in contrast to their use rating, with respondents rating consulting their colleagues and the law librarian and library equally important. In 3.4.2 reference is made to various studies, which indicate that attorneys prefer to consult their colleagues, an informal source of information, to recorded, formal sources of information. Various other studies have highlighted the importance of law librarians and libraries as a source of work-related information. Lee in her research into library and information services to legal practitioners in Cape Town found that the majority of attorneys regarded the law library as their most important source of information (cf. 5.5.1). Bivariate analysis of the position of the formal library system in relation to various informal and personal sources of information indicated that the respondents with the least number of years experience and respondents in junior positions referred more often to the law librarians and library. This finding once again suggests that the less experienced and

junior attorneys have a greater need to refer to various sources and systems of information than did older and more experienced attorneys.

The respondents rated bills, acts and regulations, the most frequently used and important sources of recorded information and also rated law reports, textbooks and loose-leaf publications very highly. This correlates with the above-mentioned findings where legislation and case law were very highly rated. It is hardly surprising that these primary sources of law are highly rated as the attorneys' most important information need is to establish the current status of the law and keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments. Bivariate analysis of significant results once again generally indicated that the younger, less experienced attorneys referred to the various categories and sources of information more often than did older and more experienced attorneys.

The respondents were also asked to rate their use of various electronic sources in relation to printed sources of information. Respondents rated an electronic medium, CD-ROM's, the most frequently used and important source of information, however printed resources were used only slightly less often. Respondents rated the importance of the various information media significantly higher than their use of these resources. This researcher is of the opinion that the young average age of the respondents in all likelihood contributed to the slightly higher rating of an electronic medium rather than printed resources (cf. 7.1). This is supported by the bivariate analysis of significant results that indicated that the younger and less experienced respondents appeared to use the various electronic resources more often than the older respondents, more experienced respondents. This correlates with Reynolds' study that found that younger attorneys are more likely to use electronic resources (cf. 4.3.1). Respondents indicated that the advantages of using electronic resources include fast and easy access to information due to the search capabilities of electronic resources and the ability to easily incorporate information into existing work documents. However some respondents indicated that it is cumbersome to scroll through digital text whilst reading and they therefore preferred the printed medium. Therefore it is not surprising that the respondents also rated printed sources of information very highly. This correlates to Garratt's findings in her study on information services in South Africa that found that attorneys appeared to prefer the flexibility of printed texts when

required to skim large sections of text (cf. 4.3.1). Respondents also indicated that a lack of knowledge of electronic information media prevented their use of electronic sources of information. The implications of this particular finding are discussed in 8.4.

The researcher indicated in 2.5 that it is generally accepted that people tend to seek out information that is most accessible, easiest to use and close to hand. As mentioned in 3.6 research has also shown that attorneys are more likely to use an information source they are familiar with and that attorneys need quick access to accurate information. This study found that respondents rated quick and easy access and accuracy as well as familiarity and currency of information very highly. The format (written or electronic) in which information is available was rated less important and is therefore less likely to influence attorneys' use of a source of information. The low rating of cost indicates that this factor is least likely to influence the decision to use a particular source of information, quite possibly because no direct cost is incurred by individual attorneys.

8.3 Legal research

Analysis of the empirical data of this study indicated that nearly all respondents do their own legal research. Attorneys in the position of director were however less likely to do their own legal research. This appears to correlate with the findings of studies that indicate that legal research is often delegated to the more junior attorneys. Various studies have found that the delegation of legal research is a common occurrence. The reason for this is that attorneys do not have sufficient time available to do legal research and legal research is therefore often delegated to junior legal staff and law librarians. Also, attorneys generally bill at hourly rates and as the hourly rates for junior attorneys are lower than for the more experienced attorneys, clients pay less for legal research done by the junior staff (cf. 3.1.1).

8.4 The role of the law library and librarian in the provision of work-related information

The overwhelming majority of respondents rated the two Bowman Gilfillan libraries as very important in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs. Attorneys require a great deal of information to be able to provide a legal service to their clients and the firm's well-stocked law libraries provide access to a wealth of resources (print and electronic). The above-mentioned finding correlate with the findings of the various studies that have found that attorneys regard law libraries as a very important source of information (cf. 4.3 and 5.5.1). The importance of the library was further illustrated by respondents who indicated that a lack of relevant library resources has the potential to delay their flow of work and could have cost implications due to time-delays.

It is interesting to note that respondents do not necessarily visit the library to access the resources and services offered by the library as respondents indicated that they most often use their desktop PC's to access the library's resources and rate this the most important method of access to the library's resources. Several respondents commented during follow-up interviews that electronic access to information via their office PC saves time as it obviates a visit to the library. However personal visits to the library and consulting the librarian were also highly rated and this was particularly true when the significantly higher importance rating of visiting the library and consulting the librarian is considered. Age, position and years' experience influenced respondents' use of the method that they used to access the library's resources and services as the younger, less experienced respondents in junior positions rated access to information via their desktop PC higher than their older, more experienced colleagues. This correlates with the findings that indicated that the younger respondents appeared to use the various electronic resources more often than the older respondents.

The respondents indicated that they used the library or consulted a librarian most frequently to find specific information or a specific publication and rated these their most important reasons for using the library. Although the respondents indicated that they did not use the library or consult a librarian often to keep up-to-date with the

latest legal developments, they did rate this an important function of the library. As attorneys' most important information need is to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments it is hardly surprising that they should rate this an important function of the library. This particular finding suggests that the Bowman Gilfillan librarians should consider whether the current awareness services currently provided by the libraries satisfies the information needs of the attorneys. As mentioned in 8.1, attorneys most often keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments through discussions with other legal professionals and rate these discussions their most important method of keeping up-to-date.

Respondents rated the law librarian's knowledge of information sources and electronic searching skills their most important attributes. Also highly rated were the law librarian's ability to assist users with legal research, legal research skills, the ability to keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments and the ability to provide training in the use of legal resources (print and electronic). The above-mentioned attributes are included in the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) set of competencies that law librarians should have. As the respondents indicated that a lack of knowledge of electronic information media had a negative effect on their ability to use electronic sources of information, the high rating afforded the ability to provide training in the use of legal resources in various formats is hardly surprising (cf 7.3.4.). The law librarian's knowledge and understanding of the law was not rated an important attribute. This appears to be in contrast to the position of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), which includes knowledge of the legal system and legal profession as one of the core competencies of law librarians. Based on the knowledge obtained from working as a law librarian, this researcher is of the opinion that a law librarian should in fact have a basic knowledge of the legal system in order to be an effective law librarian.

As mentioned in 1.3 this researcher attempted to seek answers to the following research questions:

- Why do attorneys seek information?
- What are the information needs of attorneys?
- What types of information do attorneys require?

- Which sources of information do attorneys use?
- What are the factors influencing the information-seeking behaviour of attorneys?
- What is the role of the law library and librarian in the provision of information?

It can be concluded that attorneys require a vast amount of work-related information to provide a legal service to their clients and that their most important information need is to establish the current status of the law and to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments. They therefore require access to primary (legislation and case law, etc) and secondary sources of law (textbooks, etc) as well as non-legal information. The findings also indicated that attorneys require quick and easy access to current and accurate information and that factors such as age, number of years experience as an attorney and position in the firm appear to influence the use of the various sources and systems of information as the younger, less experienced attorneys had a greater need for the various sources and systems of information. The attorneys rated an informal source of information, their colleagues (other legal professionals) and the formal library system equally important and whilst the law librarians and libraries undoubtedly have an important role to play in the provision of work-related information, they will have to heed the information needs of their users and ensure that the resources and services of the library are tailored to meet the information needs of the users.

8.5 Recommendations for future research

As mentioned previously, little has been written on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of legal practitioners in South Africa. This researcher attempted to add to the body of knowledge in the field by researching the information needs of the attorneys in a large South African law firm. This researcher recommends that further in-depth research be undertaken on the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of information to legal practitioners. This research could include a survey to the staff of law libraries questioning the role of the information professional in law libraries and type of services delivered. This researcher also suggests that

further research be conducted on the information needs of legal practitioners such as advocates and judges. Research into the information needs of judges could be of particular interest as subsequent to the passing of the new Constitution almost every legal question is examined through the lense of the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution.

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University of Cape Town

APPENDIX A : QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF ATTORNEYS

1 PERSONAL DATA

1.1 Please indicate your age in years. ___

1.2 Please indicate your position in the firm.

Candidate attorney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Associate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Director	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.3 How many years experience do you have as an attorney?

1.4 Which areas of the law do you specialise in? Please specify the most significant area of law.

2 WORK-RELATED INFORMATION NEEDS

2.1 Do you need and use any of the following categories of information (or specify others you use)? Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important/not used) to 4 (very important/heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Case law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal practice & procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forms & Precedents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-legal information (eg. information about client's business)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information on seminars, conferences, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information on experts in different areas of the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 Indicate whether you use any of the following methods / sources to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments and information? Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Attend conferences, seminars, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussions with legal professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current law (LAWSA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law journals / reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legalbrief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library bulletin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 2.3 Briefly indicate why you need information in the course of your work, e.g. to establish the current status of the law, to advise clients, to draft a contract, etc.
- _____

3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 3.1 Do you consult / use any of the following when you need information? Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Colleagues (attorneys) within the firm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal professionals outside the firm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-legal professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal collection of information resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law librarian / library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 3.2 Do you need and use any of the following specific library sources of information? Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Law reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bills, acts, regulations, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forms & Precedents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government Gazettes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loose-leaf publications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal dictionaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law directories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 3.3 Which of the following information media do you use and prefer? Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Internet subscriptions (e.g. SA Company Search)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intranet (e.g. LexisNexis Butterworths)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CD-ROMS (e.g. Jutastat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Printed sources of information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments _____

- 3.4 Do the following factors influence your use of a source of information and to what extent do these factors influence your use of a specific source of information? Indicate importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4
Familiarity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quick and easy access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Currency of information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accuracy of information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completeness of information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Format (printed or electronic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.5 Who would do the searching when you seek information related to your work needs?

Yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior associate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candidate attorney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 THE LIBRARY

4.1 How important are the resources and services provided by the library for the satisfaction of your work-related information needs? Indicate importance on a scale of 1 (not important) to 4 (very important).

Level of importance			
1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2 Do you consider the resources and services provided by the library to be:

	Inadequate	Adequate	Excellent
Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services provided (e.g. Information service)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.3 If inadequate, has this affected your professional work and to what extent?

4.4 Indicate how you access the resources and services provided by the library. Indicate frequency of use and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Access information via your PC (e.g. Jutastat, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit the library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask the librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access the library catalogue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.5 For what purpose do you use the library or consult a librarian? Indicate frequency and importance on a scale of 1 (not important / not used) to 4 (very important / heavily used).

	Frequency of use				Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
To locate and consult a specific publication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To find specific information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To find a few "good" articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To do legal research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.6 Which of the following attributes should a law librarian have? Indicate level of importance on a scale of 1 (not important) to 4 (very important).

	Level of importance			
	1	2	3	4
Knowledge of the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of information sources (printed & electronic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic searching skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assist users with legal research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide training in the use of legal resources in printed and electronic formats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand specific areas of the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COMMENTS

Please make any comments or suggestions which will contribute to the satisfaction of your information needs.

NAME & SURNAME (Optional) _____

Thank you