

LEX LOCI'S TRAVELS

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An occasional one-pager from The Public Land Consultancy

Not a Flag, and not at Half Mast



It looks like a yellow flag, but as Lex has learned recently, it's not yellow, it's gold - and it's not a flag, it's a standard. It flies over Government House, and announces to the world that the Governor, Linda Dessau, is in residence.

Flags around the State came down to half-mast on the death of the Queen, but not the Governor's standard. Monarchs may come and go, but the Crown continues on, uninterrupted.

But what is 'the Crown'?

For our purposes, it is an abstract institution, more properly described as *the Crown in the Right of the State of Victoria*.

Just to confuse things, there is another Crown at work simultaneously, namely the *Crown in the Right of the Commonwealth of Australia*. But if we're thinking about Crown land (like that on which Government House stands) then we mean the Victorian Crown.

So who appointed Ms Dessau as representative of the Crown? The top-down view of society tells us it was HMQ, an appointment reconfirmed in recent days as being made by HMK.

The bottom-up view tells us that Ms Dessau was appointed by the Premier, acting on the authority of the State Government, acting on the authority of the voters. Marvelous how these contradictory versions of our civic apparatus seem to coexist.



*Now in residence: the hon.
Linda Dessau, AM.*

Now the Governor is not supposed to intervene in day to day administration - but Lex knows of one poor public servant who picked up the phone to hear "Hello, this is the Governor..." It wasn't Ms Dessau calling, but one of her predecessors, with a query about the status of the road into the back door of Government House, alongside the Royal Botanic Gardens. Guess that's another story. ♦

See you there! Lex Loci
Government House is in Bunurong Country