We are all administrative lawyers now. A combination of legislative over-regulation and bureaucratic incompetence means that advocates who steered clear of administrative law a decade ago can no longer afford to do so now. But keeping up with the burgeoning case law on judicial review law is a daunting task: who of us has the time to monitor how many angels are currently dancing on the pinhead of PAJA’s definition of ‘administrative action’; or how many new jurisprudential pathways have been discovered into the promised land of ‘judicial review’; or whether the Constitutional Court has poured more sand into the muddy waters it created in Fredericks v MEC for Education and Training, Eastern Cape 2002 (2) SA 693 (CC), Chirwa v Transnet Ltd 2008 (4) SA 367 (CC) and Gcaba v Minister for Safety and Security 2010 (1) SA 238 (CC). For all of these reasons, we should be grateful for the publication of the second edition of Cora Hoexter’s Administrative Law in South Africa. It is essential reading for anyone who practises in the area of administrative law (ie all of us).

Administrative Law in South Africa seeks to cut a path through the thicket of case law that has become a feature of the law reports (the author’s preface tells that there have been some 300 new judgments since the first edition was published in 2007). It accomplishes this task with considerable skill and conspicuous clarity. The most striking feature of the second edition is Professor Hoexter’s willingness to systematise the case law that has accumulated around PAJA. Whereas some textbooks degenerate into an interminable summary of one judgment after another, Professor Hoexter seeks rather to make sense of the case law and to stitch together its ragged edges. The result is a work of manifest erudition that will be of assistance to academics and practitioners alike. In a curious throwback to the formulary process of Roman law times, the Constitutional Court in Bato Star Fishing (Pty) Ltd v Minister of Environmental Affairs 2004 (4) SA 490 (CC) para 27 warned practitioners of the necessity to identify which provisions of PAJA are relied upon as review grounds. The result has been the swift replacement of the ‘Shidiack shotgun’ with the ‘Bato blunderbuss’. Practitioners who have the misfortune of spending their waking hours wading through founding affidavits which incorporate the Bato blunderbuss may well wonder whether administrative law could ever be more than a dismalscience – an elaborate game of spot-the-error.

This second edition provides an antidote to this despair. It presents a compelling argument for how administrative law can be conceptualised in a manner that is principled and coherent, rational and rigorous. There is no better book dealing with the subject in South Africa.

Alfred Cockrell SC, Johannesburg Bar

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**Legal Crossword**

Number 19

**Clues**

**Across**
1. What you need in a hot court (5)
2. What the insurer does to the rights of the insured (9)
3. An English delivery (10)
4. Apt to generate debate (9)
5. To dishonour an undertaking (6)

**Down**
1. The State’s gripe (6)
2. Sometimes forced by prudence (10)
3. Counsel’s fees on attorney’s bill (12)
4. Things that can be bought and sold (2+9)
5. What the supporter must pay (11)

Answers on page 46