



Appeals+ The Right Addition to Your Trial Team

[Third Court's Backlog Improving](#)

Posted on January 24, 2010 by [D. Todd Smith](#)

On the heels of [Chief Justice Woodie Jones's presentation](#) to the Austin Bar's Civil Appellate Law Section last week, the *Austin American-Statesman* has published an [article discussing the Third Court of Appeals' backlog problem](#) and how the Court is addressing it.

The Chief spent some time at the beginning of his talk discussing the backlog situation and what is being done to rectify the problem. In short, the oldest cases have been given priority and reassigned to justices who are caught up on their own workloads. In just one year, with the help of some temporary staff attorneys, the Court has made significant progress and no longer has the biggest backlog of the fourteen intermediate appellate courts.

The Chief devoted the remainder of his time to TAMES—the Texas Appeals Management and E-filing System—which will begin implementation this year. TAMES and appellate e-filing generally will be the subject of another post.

The *Statesman* article placed much of the blame for the backlog on former Chief Justice Kenneth Law, whom Jones replaced following the last general election, but also recognized that an eight-month vacancy produced by Justice Mack Kidd's death and Justice Bea Ann Smith's retirement were significant factors. The article acknowledged that the Court has made progress, disposing of 82 of its oldest cases within the past year.