

# NTYL AGENDA 2001

Happy New Year to all the NT Young Lawyer members and a welcome to those who have recently commenced articles in the Northern Territory.

Since our last bash at at Rydges Plaza in October 2000 I was fortunate to attend the Australian Young Lawyers Committee ("AYLC") meeting in Sydney on 17 November 2000 on behalf of NTYL. Present at the meeting were Ms Alison Robertson (WA), Mr Matt Johnston (NSW) Mr Justin Serong (Chair AYL Committee, Vic Bar), Ms Cathy Dowsett (ACT), Mr Kerry Smith (Qld), Mr Luke Reinberger (Tas), Ms Kim Alvino (SA) and Mr Gerard O'Neil (Administrator).

The three main issues discussed were:

- (1) CLEs (Continuing Legal Education Seminars);
- (2) the 21st Century Workplace;
- (3) and Practical Legal Training;

Following the meeting submissions were made by the Committee in response to the Law Council of Australia's soon to be released Report of the 2010 Taskforce and the chapters dealing with the above three topics.

In summary, AYLC submitted that CLEs should be identified as a key component in the discussion of 'educating the profession for the future', thus highlighting the need for legal training to be a process that continues throughout a lawyer's career (as opposed to ending at the completion of a degree/or being a pre admission requirement).

I was informed that CLEs are compulsory in NSW and that a certain number must be attended pursuant to the Legal Profession Regulations. The NSW Young Lawyers organise up to thirty CLEs in March, which is the final month in the period of compliance for each year. They charge for each attendance and have a huge operating budget. Then again, they have 7,000 members compared with our 50. But remember, NTYL members get free entry to NTYL CLEs for the year they join up — so sign up now! A steal at \$20.

With regard to the 21st Century Workplace, the Committee submitted that members of the state bodies have frequently complained that the long hours, use of time-costing as the predominate method of measuring productivity, and other working practices, are forcing young lawyers to change jobs more frequently, leave private practice or even work overseas.

And finally, with regards to Practical Legal Training (PLT) it was noted that in some states there was a trend developing towards firms conducting PLT in-house, and that this had the potential to disenfranchise smaller firms. It was also noted that the use of in-house PLT would expand in NSW, with medium sized firms choosing to conduct certain parts of the Priestley 12 in-house, and contract a training agency to conduct PLT on the remaining units.

I submitted on behalf of the NTYL that due to the fact that our jurisdiction does not currently have a PLT provider, and won't in the foreseeable future, those students who graduate from NTU who are unable to secure articles are forced to travel interstate and complete articles or a PLT course there. Those who cannot secure articles interstate are at the mercy of the cost of the PLT course (which can vary from state to state, but at the very least is \$4-5,000), the cost of accommodation during the course and the cost of travel to and from interstate.



*Reinis Dancis, NT Young Lawyers President*

I have spoken to recent graduates from NTU and some have undertaken PLT by correspondence, but this still has compulsory attendance for a number of weeks interstate and its associated costs. The conclusion is that if you are unable to get articles in the Territory, you're going have to buy your ticket to practice elsewhere.

On a different note the NTYL is updating the award winning articles handbook and I ask that if anyone would like to help with the update that they please contact me.

I finally take this opportunity to thank the 2000 NTYL Committee who worked hard to organise the CLEs and social events last year and thank those who donated their time in presenting those CLEs. I ask that all NTYL members check their emails and in trays for notification of upcoming events this year as participation is the key to NTYL continuing to serve its members in 2001. For those who are interested in getting involved in NTYL please contact me or any of the committee members.

See you at the first CLE!



*Australian Young Lawyers Committee at their meeting in Sydney in October 2000.*