

## NT Women Lawyers Association

### Domestic Violence

Recently Domestic Violence Legal Help (DVLH) released a Discussion paper entitled "The Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence : The Myth Continues...". The paper highlights the ongoing reluctance of police to exercise their powers pursuant to sections 4 and 6 of the Domestic Violence Act (to obtain urgent restraining orders in a domestic context) and the

current dialogue between DVLH and prosecutions regarding the hiatus in representation in subsequent mentions of restraint orders when police have taken out an initial restraint order. These are important issues to be debated.

The paper has been distributed to, inter alia, members of Northern Territory Parliament. To obtain a copy of the Discussion Paper or for more information, contact Julie Franz at DVLH on 08 89 82 1111.

Congratulations to Lyn McDade who has been appointed the new Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Courts Administration and Fiona Hussin who has been elected President of the Top End Women's Legal Service.

### Report on Retention of Legal Practitioners (WA)

The Law Society of Western Australia and Women Lawyers of Western Australia have jointly surveyed and reported on the retention of lawyers in WA. Practitioners exiting the profession in WA were surveyed after it was realised that many were leaving practice with 3-7 years experience. There is reason to believe that this is also the case in the NT.

The report stated that it sensed that "the practice of law has become increasingly estranged from the interests of the community it is intended to serve" and recommended changing the 'culture' of legal practice. The legal profession needs to be "clear about the attitudes and aptitudes it believes are necessary for good lawyers". The report also highlighted the importance of good management in a legal practice.

### TEWLS Projects

The Top End Women's Legal Service has funded a women's art project in Kunbarllanjja and one of the results is a wonderful poster entitled "Are we looking after our kids the right way?" - highlighting the consequences of alcohol abuse in the community. TEWLS is also producing radio scripts in 16 NESB languages (including Spanish, Thai, and Greek).



These scripts involve scenarios setting out legal problems and issues such as separation and welfare rights. They will be broadcast on Top FM and SBS.

### Annual General Meeting

At the AGM two Committee Members resigned - Margaret Orwin and Barbara Tiffin. Both members have been very actively involved in the committee of NTWLA and I would like to thank them for their efforts. Our new committee members are Sharon Burnett (Clayton Utz) and Jacqueline Presbury (Cridlands) and we welcome them.

The full Committee for 1999/2000 is:

Melanie Little - President  
Janelle Martin - Vice President  
Britt Lardelli - Secretary  
Sharon Burnett - Treasurer  
Cassandra Goldie  
Jacqueline Presbury  
Therese Austin  
Kate Halliday



Melanie Little, President

Membership - please forward your membership renewals to GPO Box 3384 Darwin 0801

This poster was designed and produced by women and community legal workers at Kunbarllanjja (the project was coordinated by Jude Kenny and funded by TEWLS, ADU and Injalak).

### RIGHTS ON SHOW

The Darwin Community Legal Service is hosting *Rights on Show* to mark National Human Rights Day, Friday 10 December.

*Rights on Show* is a community based Art Award and Exhibition about Human Rights. This year's show focuses on Human Rights and Older People in celebration of International Year of Older Persons.

The show is open to all members of the community. Any medium. There are a number of awards, up to a total value of \$1400. These are divided into three categories: primary school, secondary school, and open to all ages.

Please deliver art with an entry form to DCLS, cnr Manton and McMinn Streets by Tuesday 30 November.

For more information or entry forms phone Camilla at DCLS on 8982 1199.

