

Guest speaker - Law Week 1999

South Australian District Court Chief Judge Terry Worthington will be this year's guest speaker at luncheons in Alice Springs and Darwin to mark Law Week 1999.

Chief Judge Worthington has suggested a presentation of a light-hearted speech for the profession - an address not to be missed!

The judge is no stranger to the Northern Territory profession arriving almost 22 years ago as visiting counsel.

When Judge Worthington was appointed Chief Judge in 1997, the Attorney General of South Australia said: "His Honour is known for his sense of humour, his easy-going style and exuberant nature". These qualities will be put to the test when he arrives in Alice Springs on Wednesday, 19 May and is whisked from the airport to a barbecue on a property about 10 kilometres out of town.

But Judge Worthington has told *Balance* he is keen to shed his "down south" winter gear and partake of the Territory's casual and welcoming repartee.

He will then fly to Darwin to speak at Parliament House on Friday, 21 May at noon.

Chief Judge Worthington was awarded Silk in 1988 and appointed to the district court in 1995 after a career of 28 years in private practice.

He has had a long involvement with the Law Society of South Australia, serving as president between 1985-86 and as a member of Council for 14 years.

Chief Judge Worthington has also figured on the national scene, as the Law Society of South Australia's delegate to the Law Council between 1985 and 1988.

Judge Worthington was chairman of the Legal Services Commission of South Australia for almost 10 years and has served on the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Upon his appointment his Honour highlighted his concerns on the cost of access to justice.

We have it on good authority that his Honour is also an avid bridge player and a mean cook,



Chief Judge Terry Worthington

although the latter has always been a source of amusement. Very much the family man, his Honour is married with five children, all of whom live in South Australia.

Invitations to the luncheons are on their way. Bookings with payment can be made to the Law Society of the Northern Territory.

National legal services market seminar

The Australian legal profession as we know it is changing. So what effect will this have on practitioners in the Northern Territory?

Come and find out at a seminar to be held at the Northern Territory Supreme Court on Friday, 11 June, 1999. The Law Society will lay on lunch at the seminar which will be officially opened by Attorney General The Hon. Mr Denis Burke at 10am. Interstate speakers have been invited to canvass issues of concern and planning is well underway. The tone will be set by the Dean of the Law School of the Northern Territory University, Sue Oliver.

Ms Oliver will give an overview of the impact of the changes including the introduction of travelling practising certificates and will be followed by an interstate speaker who will present the arguments against some of the aspects of the national arrangements.

After lunch executive Law Council of Australia member Ron Heinrich of NSW will discuss the vehicles for conducting a legal practice, multi-disciplinary practices and limitation of liability.

A representative of the Law Society of Queensland will address the reservation of legal work for the profession. A panel will then take questions from the floor.

As a result of a quick survey of Alice Springs partners, the proceedings in Darwin will be videotaped and an edited version of the events will be broadcast in Alice Springs at a function to be organised by the Society. The tentative date for the Alice Springs function is Friday, 9 July.

The Law Council of Australia's policy decisions in relation to the reservation of legal work, MDPs and the capping of liability are available on the Law Council's home page. The address is <http://www.lawcouncil.asn.au>. Enabling legislation for the national practising certificate has been introduced into parliaments in most jurisdictions, the exception being of the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania.

President of the Law Society Mr Steve Southwood urges all practitioners to attend the seminar. "The changes are in conformity

with national competition policy and have important implications for the delivery of legal services in the Northern Territory," he said. "They will effect the manner in which legal practices can be conducted, the range of work that will exclusively be undertaken by lawyers and the extent to which lawyers are exposed to liability, all of which have consequences for the cost of legal overheads," he said. "These are bread and butter issues which amount to the most fundamental changes to be proposed in the last 20 or 30 years," he said.

If the legal services market is to be deregulated, it is important that lawyers are permitted to compete on a level playing field. Mr Southwood said the Law Society will make recommendations to the profession on how the changes should be implemented. Subject to the views and concerns emanating from the seminar, the society will then make a submission to the Northern Territory Government.

Don't miss out on your opportunity for a free lunch and to have your say.

