

## Amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act

The Attorney General, Hon Denis Burke MLA recently introduced amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act. Those amendments will allow a court to direct a juvenile offender to a diversionary program, rather than face a period of imprisonment.

The diversionary programs apply to 15 and 16 year old property offenders when they appear in Court for the second property offence. If the offender successfully completes an approved program\*, the Court may dispose of the matter without recording a conviction.

Diversionary programs will consist of two categories:

1. Those that incorporate the process of Victim/Offender Conferencing (VOC) as successfully implemented in other jurisdictions in Australia and overseas; and

2. A number of other programs that are being identified or can be developed in accordance with the needs of individual communities.

The requirement for both programs is that they provide an alternative to the mandatory 28-day detention sentence, while allowing for greater participation by victims in the criminal justice system and giving offenders opportunities to take responsibility for their actions.

Advertisements have appeared in the NT news and Centralian Advocate in June, calling for expressions of interest for attending a July victim/offender conference facilitation workshop and for program expressions of interest/proposals to submit to the Minister for approval. The diversionary programs are scheduled for implementation across the NT by 1 August.

Prior to the workshops in Darwin (7,8 and 9 July) and Alice Springs (21, 22 and 23 July), information sessions are being held and all lawyers are invited to attend on the following dates:

- In Darwin at NT House, 9th floor, on 6 July from 1pm to 2pm.
- In Alice Springs at the training room in Belvedere House on 20 July from 1pm to 2pm.

*For more details please contact Tom Stodulka or Helmy Bakermans at the Attorney-General's Department on 8999 7466.*

*\* programs are approved by the Minister*

### The Law Society

### Annual General Meeting

will be held on

**September 9, 1999**

**Please pencil this date into your diaries.**

### Australian Advocacy Institute

### Advocacy Skills Workshop General Skills

*17-18- 19 September 1999*

Supreme Court, State Square, Darwin

**Moderator: The Honourable Justice Hampel**

*Your communication skills are important elements of persuasion in the courtroom. This workshop provides you with an opportunity to improve those skills in a supportive and learning environment.*

*Participation in this workshop will give you an opportunity to work with, and learn from, experienced and skilled advocates who have been trained to help you improve your techniques. This method, combined with your experiences, those of your colleagues and demonstrations by these skilled teachers will enlarge your understanding and performance of advocacy skills.*

**Registration fee: \$475.00**

#### Registration/ enquiries

**Rosanna Stephenson, Executive Officer**

Australian Advocacy Institute, Level 4, 360 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000

GPO Box 853k Melbourne 3001 or DX 460

Ph: (03) 9642 0222 Fax (03) 9642 0444

EMAIL: [aai@austai.com.au](mailto:aai@austai.com.au) Website [www.austai.com.au](http://www.austai.com.au)

