

NOTICEBOARD

Federal Magistrates service fees

Fees for the new Federal Magistrates Service have been set out in regulations approved by the Federal Government.

The Services' fees will be substantially lower than the fees charged in the Federal and Family Courts to reflect the fact that the new Service will deal with less complex matters than the other courts. For people who cannot afford the fees, there are also broad provisions allowing for their exemption and waiver.

According to Federal Attorney General Mr Daryl Williams "this lower structure enhances the accessibility of the Service for ordinary Australians. The Service's streamlined, more user-friendly procedures and less formal atmosphere will also result in cheaper and quicker access to the justice system.

"The Government is committed to providing all Australians with simpler, more affordable options for resolving their disputes. The establishment of the Federal Magistrates Service is an important step towards realising that goal," he said.

AIJA Annual General Meeting

AIJA members are advised that this year's Annual General Meeting will not be held in conjunction with the Annual Conference as has generally been the practice in the past.

The Annual Conference is being held in Darwin between 14 — 16 July 2000. The AIJA auditors have advised they will be unable to have audited financial statements ready for the AGM if it is held to coincide with the Annual Conference.

For that reason the AGM will be held later in the year, possibly in early October to coincide with the October meeting and the Technology for Justice Conference.

A Notice of Annual General Meeting will be sent to all members in accordance with the provisions of the AIJA Rules.

Human rights briefing by the Federal Court

The Federal Court is holding a briefing to discuss the expanded role of the Federal Court in hearing complaints against race, sex and disability discrimination arising from the Human Rights Legislation Amendment Act 1999.

From 13 April 2000 the Federal Court will hear complaints of unlawful discrimination made under the Sex Discrimination Act, Racial Discrimination Act or Disability Discrimination Act. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission will continue its role investigating and attempting to conciliate complaints.

The Court would like to ensure that those who are potentially affected by these changes are briefed about the Court's role and have an opportunity to discuss any issues which might enhance access to the Court and its facilities.

The briefing will be held at the Exhibition Gallery, Darwin Entertainment centre, 93 Mitchell Street, Darwin on Friday 7 July 2000 from 2.000 until 3.30pm.

People wishing to attend are asked to RSVP by Friday 30 June by telephoning: 08 8941 2333.

Darwin: Poll finds even split over mandatory sentencing

A poll conducted in the Darwin community found that the population is split evenly on whether the Territory needs mandatory sentencing.

The poll was conducted by marketing company Smartpoll.

Four hundred randomly selected households were told: "the Territory is different and there's a requirement for mandatory sentencing." Smartpoll said the community was fairly evenly split.

Donors sought for Magna Carta Sculpture

Donors are being sought to establish a Magna Carta Place and Sculpture in the Parliamentary zone adjacent to the old Parliamentary House in Canberra as a Centenary of Federation project.

Australia houses on permanent display at Parliament House, Canberra, the issue of Magna Carta 1297 by King Edward I. Originally sealed by King John at Runnymede, beside the Thames, on 15 June 1215 the legal concepts contained within the Magna Carta have been passed on through the British parliamentary and justice system to be enshrined in Australian Parliamentary Acts, statutes and in the common law.

The Magna Carta Sculpture project, coordinated by the Australia-Britain Society Magna Carta Committee aims to provide a dedicated precinct where the shared Australia and British heritage of freedom under law will be remembered and celebrated.

The design by Canberra-based Australian architect Alastair Falconer and British exhibition designer Marcus Lee will include a ceremonial pavillion made of granite, brass, bronze and stainless steel.

The finished Magna Carta Place will be built at a cost of \$800,000. The British government has pledged \$400,000, marking its gift to Australia for the Centenary of Federation in 2001.

Donations to fund this project are needed to progress the design, produce the sculpture, landscape the site and cover administration costs. Donations are payable to the Australia-Britain Society Foundation and are tax deductible. Sponsors' entitlement to public recognition of their generosity will be fully met.

The Magna Carta Sculpture will be formally opened at a reception, on site, in October 2001.