

Still more to be done

By the time you read this column, there will be a new President and Committee. I will publish details after our AGM.

It has been a very interesting year, and I have enjoyed my time as President. It's a great opportunity to meet new people and make contacts for the future. I would recommend it to any women out there, especially those new to the profession.

I would like to thank my Committee who have been wonderful and of great assistance. It always seemed when we were very busy at work, we were also in the middle of trying to organise a function, and to their credit, we managed to keep everyone happy, clients included.

I would especially like to thank Judge Thomas, our patron, who has been very generous with her time, and has always made herself available to talk to the Committee.

On the national level, we have been involved in the preparation of a report to be presented to the Prime Minister on the issue of paid maternity leave. This report has now been submitted. The national body has been also asked to provide names of suitable female barristers who might be appointed to take over the role of Justice Mary Gaudron when she retires from the High Court.

Work Health Amendment

Changes to the Work Health Act have been passed in parliament and will come into effect soon. The changes are wide-ranging and are a result of a recent review of the Act.

Work Health Minister Syd Stirling told parliament: "These changes (to the Work Health Act) are aimed at improving the overall efficiency of the Workers Compensation Scheme...".

The Minister's second reading speech can be found at www.nt.gov.au/lant/hansard, the *Work Health Amendment Bill (No 2)* can be found at www.nt.gov.au/dcm/register ①

Capitation fees are again an issue. A draft report prepared by the national body has been distributed and we are currently assessing its impact on the Northern Territory.

The proposal at this stage is that 10 percent of the fees collected would be paid to the national body.

This would be used towards airfares and other expenses for members. The NT would be better off under this scheme, as it is difficult for us to raise the funds needed to finance airfares and accommodation from our membership fees.

We do not have the membership to do this. It is also something the national body must consider, as they will be subsidising the smaller states and territories.

We have been invited by the NT Government to make a submission to them on the review of the *Ombudsman (NT) Act*. If anyone is interested in contributing to this Review, please contact me and I will provide you with the relevant information.

We have also been invited participate in a survey by the Chief Minister's Department, called *Engaging with the Community*.



Sandra Robinson, WLA President

If anyone is interested in participating, please contact me and I will provide you with copies of the survey.

We bid farewell to our retiring Magistrate, Alasdair McGregor. Many of us will have fond memories of appearing before Mr McGregor, and we wish him well in his retirement.

Congratulations to Jenny Blokland on her appointment as the new Magistrate. Its great to see one of our members appointed to the bench.

COMING UP

The 12th Alicia Johnson Memorial Lecture is being hosted by the Women's Advisory Council on Friday 30 August 2002 at 6pm at the Strangers Dining Room, Parliament House. These lectures are always very interesting and places are keenly sought. ①



Drinks night for September

Come and catch up with the
NT Young Lawyers at
Shenanigans

We'll be there from 5.30pm on
Friday, 13 September

Hope to see you there!