

Improving Tennant legal services

A consultation and research project coordinated by the NT Legal Aid Commission aims to improve the awareness, availability and delivery of legal services to people and organisations in Tennant Creek.

The project is being undertaken in cooperation with other legal service providers (including the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, the Central Australian Women's Legal Service and the Law Society of the NT) and with the participation of a range of organisations in Tennant Creek.

The project aims to identify any missing legal services needed by Tennant Creek residents and propose ways in which those needs could be met through improved service delivery.

The needs may relate to:

- particular areas of law — family law, debts, consumer problems, employment issues, welfare benefits, compensation for injuries, criminal law.
- particular kinds of services — information or education about the law, advice about legal problems, representation on cases, other kinds of legal assistance (for example legal assistance to community groups getting a project started).

The project needs input about needs and opportunities to develop better services.

How services might be improved will depend on the kind of needs identified, the capacities of legal services to adapt their practices and the opportunities for building on existing services and infrastructure available in Tennant.

The project aims to promote agreement between relevant organisation about:

- the legal needs of the region,
- the possibility of cooperation between legal and other service providers to improve services to meet those needs, and

- the options for innovative service delivery.

The intention is to create momentum among the service providers to take up the project after the project consultant has completed his work.

Consultation paper

A paper has been prepared setting out the services currently available, the needs and opportunities identified to date, and provides a number of options for improved services.

Feedback on the consultation paper is sought from service providers, community organisations and the broader community in Tennant Creek.

Workshops will be held in Tennant Creek to further develop the ideas in the consultation paper.

Following these workshops a final report will present several models for improved services for consideration.

For copies of the consultation paper or further information contact Samantha Willcox, Community Legal Education Officer at NTLAC via email: samantha.willcox@ntlac.nt.gov.au or telephone: 8999 3000.

The paper will be made available on the Commission's website: www.nt.gov.au/ntlac

Continuing Legal Education Seminar on Costs

The Law Society's program of Continuing Legal Education seminars has well and truly kicked off with the next CLE scheduled on 20 March.

In order to make the seminars available to all Territory practitioners, the Law Society is presenting the CLE's in Darwin with links to Katherine and Alice Springs via video conferencing — the first time this has been tried. A video will also be available.

The first seminar was on *Understanding the Draft Information Bill* and presented by Sue Oliver from the Department of Justice.

The aim of the 20 March seminar is to provide a practical guide to practitioners about costs.

The Society's guest speaker on this topic is John Neill from Ward Keller.

A fuller program of the CLE seminars is on page 28 of *Balance* — it will be updated as more details are confirmed.

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