

# New NAAJA Darwin office officially opened by Attorney-General the Hon Robert McClelland MP and NAAJA Chairperson Dorothy Fox

Friday 2nd September 2011

Priscilla Collins  
Chief Executive Officer  
North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency



*The Hon Robert McClelland MP, NAAJA Chairperson Ms Dorothy Fox, NAAJA Deputy Chairperson Mr Norman George with the "One Mob, Different Country Dancers".*

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) Darwin office was officially opened on 1st September 2011 by Attorney-General the Hon Robert McClelland MP and NAAJA Chairperson Dorothy Fox.

Dorothy Fox opened the evening with a welcome to country which was followed by the Attorney-General welcoming everyone to the event and acknowledging the hard work and dedication NAAJA delivers to Aboriginal people in the Top End of the Northern Territory.

We were very privileged to have the One Mob, Different Country dancers perform for the guests at the opening. NAAJA then held a smoking ceremony with Roxy who explained the importance to smoke the new building.

The opening was an exciting evening for NAAJA, which has grown in recent years to become the largest legal practice in the Northern Territory. In addition to the work we do in criminal, civil and

family law, we have also expanded our services to include a range of positive initiatives to promote justice for Aboriginal people, including Prisoner Throughcare, Prison Support and Community Legal Education.

We were very pleased to be joined at the opening by the the Hon Chief Justice Trevor Riley, the Hon Justice Peter Barr, Chief Magistrate Hilary Hannam and Magistrates Sue Olliver and Elizabeth Morris, Police Commissioner John McRoberts, CEO of the Department of Justice Greg Shannahan, Director of the NT Legal Aid Commission Suzan Cox QC, and many colleagues from the legal profession who have worked with and for Aboriginal legal services in the Top End, including Colin McDonald QC.

It was also a night for us to recognise the contribution of our family, friends and supporters in the community to the important work we do.

NAAJA has existed since 1 February 2006, following the merger of the three existing Aboriginal Legal Services in the Top End - NAALAS in Darwin, KRALAS in Katherine and Miwatj in Nhulunbuy. We had long outgrown our old Darwin offices at 1 Gardiner Street, into which NAALAS had moved in 1981. With the support of the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the Aboriginal Benefits Account, we were able to purchase our new Darwin office. Many practitioners will remember it as the old Cridlands building (or going further back, the old AMP building, opened in 1969).

NAAJA Chairperson, Dorothy Fox, said of the opening: 'We are extremely pleased to officially open our new NAAJA Darwin office. NAAJA has a dynamic and talented team of lawyers and staff who continue to work towards gaining justice for Aboriginal people and keeping their culture, tradition and law strong'. ●