

NTBA bi-annual Civil Conference

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President,
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The year 2014 promises to be an extremely eventful year for the Northern Territory Bar Association (NTBA). There are two major events occurring which make this year stick out. The first one, in order, is the 2nd NTBA bi-annual Civil Conference which is being held at the Timor Plaza Hotel in Dili, East Timor from Wednesday 9 – Saturday 12 July 2014. As it happens it follows on from the National Judges Conference which is being held up here in Darwin from 6-9 July.

The decision to hold what is only the 2nd NTBA Conference up in Dili; East Timor is a bold and progressive one and deserving of strong support. We are all hoping that the Conference is a success and pays dividends for the attendees and for the future as regards relations between our neighbour and the Northern Territory Legal Profession.

The programme is sparkling with no shortage of top shelf speakers. The locale is extremely positive and brave, as East Timor, a seriously struggling country, is very much a neighbour of Australia, and in particular Darwin. It's not without significance that the anniversary of the Darwin Bombing is also the anniversary of the Japanese Invasion of Dili, namely the 19 February 1942.

Further, the East Timorese endeavours in resisting the Japanese invasion which included their alliance with the Australian Commando groups who were heroically stationed there is one

of the great chapters in Australian Military History.

The endeavours of the "Sparrow Brigade" and the incredible assistance given to them by the Timorese peoples, justifiably goes down in the annals as one of the great achievements of Australian Military history. This country will always owe a large debt to the peoples of East Timor for their incredible assistance and huge losses in the Second World War.

The relationship was of course soured by the Australian Government's conduct during the Indonesian Invasion and the subsequent Pine Gap Treaty and some of these aspects will be touched upon during the Conference. The Conference is also attracting the interests of the Law Council of Australia and its International Division as well as Law Asia itself. It can only augur well for the future, for our profession and the pursuance of the Rule of Law in East Timor.

The Conference itself will be seeking to build on links that have already been established between Northern Territory Supreme Court Judges and the Timor Leste Judges. In recent years there have been meetings between both said Judges here in Darwin and in Dili.

The Conference theme will be **Common Issues/Common Solutions?** And, in particular:

1. The Tensions between Western Legal Systems and the Customary Law of

Indigenous Communities, and

2. Legal Issues Relevant to Resource Exploitation in the Timor Gap.

There will be a host of impressive speakers including:

- Professor Hillary Charlesworth, one of Australia's most highly regarded experts in public international law and human rights.
- Also speaking will be Bernard Collaery, former ACT Attorney-General, and presently the lawyer representing Timor Leste in the current arbitration proceedings in The Hague, and whose legal offices in Canberra were raided recently by ASIO.
- Also, Dr. Chris Ward, (Public International Law Specialist and Barrister from Sydney), who advised and represented Timor Leste in its boundary negotiations with Australia.

The Conference programme will actually be in two parts with the main programme being backed up by a programme directed specifically towards the continuing professional development requirements for Territory practitioners.

Sessions in this programme will be presented by Northern Territory Judicial Officers and members of the Northern Territory Bar Association and will focus on; - Civil Procedure reform in the Supreme Court and the



Professor Hillary Charlesworth

Bernard Collaery

Dr. Chris Ward

Local Court; reforms in relation to the Workers Rehabilitation and Corporations Act; other core competencies required to satisfy NT CPD requirements including professional ethics and responsibility, practice management and business skills and professional skills in legal practice.

Practitioners are eligible to claim up to 10 CPD points for attendance and all required CPD competencies for Northern Territory practitioners will be covered.

Accommodation

The NTBA has reserved all accommodation at Timor Plaza from Wednesday 9 July – Sunday 13 July 2014 with various levels of rooms and apartments being available, varying in price from US \$120 – US \$180 per night.

Flights

Air North will be flying on to Dili on Wednesday 9 July 2014 and Thursday 10 July 2014 coming back on Sunday 13 July 2014.

Registration

This is a real bonus. The Conference Fee is a remarkably low \$600.00 inclusive of GST if paid prior to 31 March 2014, and from the 1 April 2014 the cost will be \$660.00. This costing includes:

- airport transfers

- admissions to all sessions of the Conference including the provision of all Conference materials
- welcome drinks at the roof garden at the Timor Plaza
- lunches, morning and afternoon teas on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and
- the Conference dinner on Saturday evening.

The fee for accompanying delegates is only \$200.00 inclusive of GST if paid prior to 31 March 2014 and from 1 April 2014 \$220.00 and that includes:

- airport transfers
- welcome drinks at the roof garden at the Timor Plaza on Wednesday evening and
- the Conference dinner on the Saturday evening.

Registration may be made by telephone or emailing Marie Turbill at William Forster Chambers on (08) 8982 4700 or clerk@williamforster.com. Registration

fees should be transferred direct to the NT Bar Association at BSB 015901 ACC 413418114.

The decision to hold what is only the second NT Bar Association Conference in Dili with such themes including such speakers is a brave and impressive endeavour and one that deserves the full support of the local legal profession.

NT Bar Readers Course

Time and space dictate that I can at this stage only flag, with later information to follow in the forthcoming edition of *The Practitioner*, that the inaugural Northern Territory Bar Readers Course is being held here in Darwin from Friday 18 July 2014 and Monday 21 July – Friday 25 July 2014, and is being run by the internationally renowned and experienced team of the Australian Advocacy Institute, and conducted by Professor The Hon. George Hampel AM QC. Details to follow. ●

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