

(L to R) Keynote speaker, Professor Frank Brennan SJ AO, Institute of Legal Studies, Australian Catholic University and Mark Blumer, National President-elect, Australian Lawyers Alliance



Delegates enjoying post-conference drinks

SA STATE CONFERENCE

By Anthony Kerin

The Australian Lawyers Alliance South Australian branch conference was held on 11 July 2008 at the Adelaide Hilton Hotel. National president-elect, Mark Blumer, opened the conference and attended on behalf of the national president, who was unavailable due to overseas commitments. We thank Mark for attending. The conference program was well put together by the committee, with some very interesting speakers.

The well-attended conference heard from Professor Frank Brennan from the Institute of Legal Studies at the Australian Catholic University, whose provocative, informative and engaging paper on 'A Charter of Rights for Australia?' presented a very balanced view on the issues and debates surrounding a charter of rights.

A WorkCover Panel discussion by prominent practitioners and members from the South Australian profession, which debated the recent significant and detrimental changes to entitlements and rights in South Australia was followed by a comparison with the WorkCover experience in Victoria, dating from the mid-1990s. Hayden Stevens, of Slater and

Gordon in Melbourne, kindly gave up his time to provide us with practical information as to the procedures involved, which will be of great assistance to practitioners, given the similar nature of many of the SA amendments to aspects of the Victorian scheme.

The workers' compensation flavour of the day continued with a presentation by Stuart Cole, barrister at Wright Chambers, on Comcare and its future in the context of a national compensation scheme. After a filling lunch, an Alliance supporter and director of Furzer Crestani Services, Mariano Rossetto, addressed some practical aspects of assessing economic loss, and also the relevance of the Zhang case.

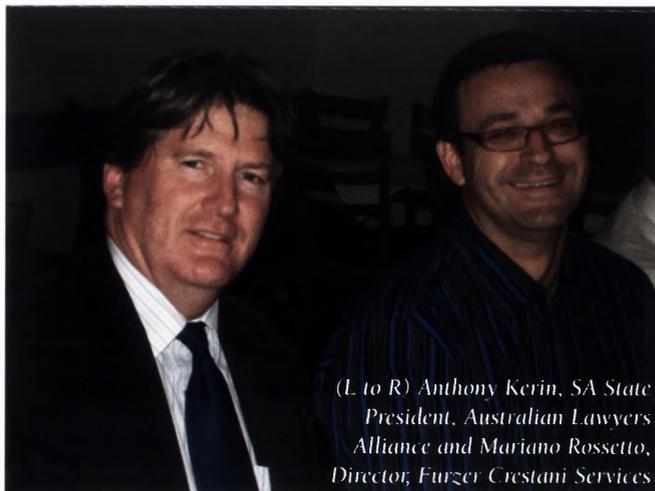
In light of diminishing rights and entitlements in workers' compensation claims, a very relevant paper was delivered by Paul Haywood-Smith QC, a barrister from Anthony Mason Chambers, about total and permanent disability insurance contracts. The emerging tort of bad faith and issues generally relevant to those matters pertaining to TPD claims may become even more significant in the future, in South Australia in particular.

The conference finished with Andrew Collett and Brian Austin, barristers from Murray Chambers and Kingston Chambers respectively, presenting on a significant array of recent cases from around Australia and South Australia.

A convivial drink was enjoyed by all to conclude the day.

Once again, the organising committee should be thanked for putting together such an interesting program. We also thank our generous sponsors, including our major partner, Furzer Crestani Services and our partners, Ability One, Evidex, LawMaster, Perpetual and TracSA, for their ongoing support.

The Committee looks forward to next year's event. ■



(L to R) Anthony Kerin, SA State President, Australian Lawyers Alliance and Mariano Rossetto, Director, Furzer Crestani Services

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