

AIJA Annual Conference 14-16 July 2000, Darwin

The Australian Institute of Judicial Administration is an independent organisation whose objective is to promote excellence in the administration of justice throughout Australia and its surrounding region. The AIJA has over 1000 members, consisting of judicial officers, lawyers, tribunal members, court administrators, government lawyers, academics and others with an interest in the administration of justice. The broad range of the Institute's membership is an important factor in its success.

AIJA has researched and published widely in matters of judicial administration and associated subjects including areas such as case management, cultural awareness, judicial ethics, technology and the courts, complex criminal trials and cross-vesting legislation, to name a few. In addition to its published research reports, it issues a regular newsletter, *AIJA News*.

AIJA also has an active education program, including programs for judges, magistrates, tribunal members, court administrators and court librarians either each year or biennially. It has also been involved in developing courses in relation to a number of specialised areas. Another important aspect of the AIJA'S education program is the provision of opportunities for the broad range of the AIJA'S membership to meet together to discuss issues of current interest in the administration of justice. The AIJA'S Annual Conference provides a regular forum for this type of exchange.

This year's AIJA Annual Conference will be held from 14-16 July 2000. The AIJA is delighted that Darwin has been chosen as the venue for this year's Conference. The keynote speaker will be Justice Susan Denham of the Supreme Court of Ireland. Justice Denham headed the inquiry into the Irish Court system, whose recommendations resulted in the

formation of the new Irish Courts Service in 1998. She will speak on the topic of 'judicial accountability'.

The conference is being run with the very active support of the Northern Territory Law Society. The Law Society Public Purpose Trust has assisted with the funding of Justice Denham's visit. The Institute is grateful to the Trust for its interest in the conference and to Northern Territory practitioners who are providing their personal assistance in relation to it.

The Conference is open to anyone with an interest in judicial administration and inquiries can be directed to the AIJA Secretariat on:

Tel: (03) 9347 6600 Fax: (03) 9347 2980
or email to the Executive Director,
Professor Greg Reinhardt on:
g.reinhardt@law.unimelb.edu.au Further
details will also be available on the AIJA
web site at: <http://www.aija.org.au>

GST: FREE ADVICE FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES

A message from the Australian Tax Office

If you're a small to medium business, free on-the-spot advice and assistance is now available to help you implement GST and other reforms.

Over 1,000 GST field officers are on the road throughout Australia answering basic technical questions, providing information and explaining what tax changes mean for individual businesses. A total of 3,000 officers operating from 31 sites around the nation are expected to be on board by June. Eighty percent of businesses are expected to be within 100kms of those sites.

The visits are free and will take as little as half an hour or up to half a day or longer — field officers will fit in with the needs of your business. Information being provided includes:

- an overview of how GST will work and how to calculate it;
- the Business Activity Statement;
- registration for an Australian Business Number;
- record keeping under The New Tax

System; and

- the importance of making cash flow decisions.

How to organise a visit

Businesses with a particular tax issue or question are encouraged to mention it to the field officer before the visit so the field officer can make sure the information is covered during the visit.

To arrange a GST field officer visit, simply call 13 24 78. You will then be called back to arrange a convenient time, either in working hours or outside working hours — whatever suits you and your business.

It is common for people to get a little nervous when the taxman knocks on their door, but when a field officer arrives — and only at your invitation — he or she comes with a guarantee from the Commissioner of Taxation, Michael Carmody, that the visit is only to give advice and assistance to help you make a smooth transition to The New Tax System. After all, it is to the Tax Office's

advantage to have small to medium business sector on track for a smooth changeover.

Other help

GST field officer visits are just one part of the comprehensive information and education underway to progressively provide businesses with all the support and information they need to implement the GST.

They complement the continuous support being provided through the tax reform internet site at www.taxreform.ato.gov.au and a range of printed material including fact sheets and detailed publications available on the internet.

They also complement the range of other assistance available, for example, the GST Assist Helpline on 13 30 88 and the GST and Business Skills Action Guide, both of which help businesses understand how the GST may impact on their business. More information is also available at www.gststartup.gov.au.