Attorney-General Delia Lawrie will attend the Criminal Lawyers Association of the Northern Territory conference in Bali which kicks off with registration and the official function tomorrow.

Ms Lawrie today said over 150 legal professionals and commentators from the Territory and around Australia were expected to attend the 12th biennial conference with presentations and workshops covering a range of legal issues.

“The Territory conference has evolved over more than two decades to be the most significant national gathering of criminal lawyers,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The conferences have consistently provided a strong critique of the law and its administration, as well as performing a powerful advocacy role in law reform.

“Delivering an effective and fair criminal justice system has always been one of the touchstone issues in democratic society, and reflects a desire to live in safe communities balanced with the ability for an accused to have a fair trial.

“Above all – and most importantly – we need to have a criminal justice system in which the public has confidence.

“My opening address at the CLANT conference on Monday morning will be from the perspective of a legislator and first law officer who is determined to deliver an effective criminal justice system in the Territory.

“This year’s theme Criminal Justice – Diagnosis Terminal? is particularly relevant to the Northern Territory as our criminal law has undergone major reform in the past eight years.

“The Territory Labor Government has implemented significant change to improve the Territory’s criminal justice system with a particular focus on
sentencing, domestic violence, legal process, criminal procedure, juvenile justice and treatment in custody.

“Budget 09 delivers $21 million for headworks for the new 1000-bed Doug Owston Correctional Facility and $3.3 million for more magistrates, more prosecutors and court staff and security.”

CLANT President John B. Lawrence said it was very important for the Attorney-General to attend and hear directly about the issues facing the Territory justice system.

“The legal profession appreciates the Territory’s first law officer being available to hear our views and explain the direction of the Government,” Mr Lawrence said.

Ms Lawrie will open the conference on Monday morning before returning to Darwin that night.

Contact: Edwin Edlund 0401 119 563

---

*Fresh Ideas, Real Results*