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Minister to attend key meetings

Acting Chief Minister and Attorney-General, Delia Lawrie, will attend key meetings in Adelaide and Sydney.

Ms Lawrie will represent the Territory Government at the Council of Australian Federation meeting in Adelaide on Thursday.

“It is important the views of the Territory are represented at the Council of Federation to ensure our unique conditions and challenges are voiced during important discussions with other states and territories,” Ms Lawrie said.

“Tomorrow’s meeting will be attended by Premiers of all states and territories and includes discussion of key issues including health and hospital reform, tax reform and climate change.”

Ms Lawrie will then meet with Attorneys-General in Sydney where a range of topics including proposed principles as a basis for surrogacy laws in Australia and the development of new offences relating to the disruption at critical energy infrastructure sites will be discussed.

“The Territory has a growing network energy infrastructure including natural gas infrastructure while the Port of Darwin will cater for an increasing number of liquefied natural gas tankers and loading facilities,” she said.

“With energy infrastructure becoming the focus of more protest action, the Standing Committee will look at if the current range of penalties is a strong enough deterrent to prevent people from damaging energy infrastructure.”

The meeting will also discuss a proposed review of access to justice across Australia that will form negotiations for a new Legal Aid National Partnership which is due to be settled next year.
“Since 2004 Northern Territory Legal Aid has seen more than 1100 additional clients walk through its doors, accessing services including legal advice and representation,” Ms Lawrie said.

“I will be ensuring the Territory’s increasing demands for legal services and particularly Indigenous legal services are well noted during discussions of the access to justice review.”

Ms Lawrie will also join Minister for Indigenous Policy, Malarndirri McCarthy, for an Indigenous Community Safety Roundtable on Friday.

“As well as a broad range of community policing, this forum will discuss alcohol policy including alcohol control,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The Henderson Government has taken a tough stance on alcohol abuse and put in place some of the strictest measures including permit and identification systems and alcohol courts in the nation.

“As well as restricting supply of alcohol the Territory Government has increased treatment and rehabilitation services with 217 rehab beds and an extra 108 sobering up shelters operating.

“Minister McCarthy and I will be sharing our experiences with other states and territories including the findings of a recent Menzies School of Health report which showed restrictions have resulted in a 18 per cent drop in alcohol consumption in Alice Springs.”

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