New Childrens Court opens in Darwin

25 February 2016

The brand new Darwin Childrens Court was today unveiled by the Northern Territory Attorney-General John Elferink and Chief Magistrate Dr John Lowndes.

The Northern Territory Government invested $1.2 million to deliver a purpose-built facility that caters to the unique needs of young people and children.

Youth and children involved in the youth justice system, or who are subject to care and protection orders, have different behavioural and emotional characteristics to adults and require a different approach in a legal environment.

“I commenced working on this project when I became the Attorney-General and it is great to see it finally come to fruition,” Mr Elferink said.

“We worked very closely with the Magistrates and the Department of Correctional Services in the development of the brand new Darwin Childrens Court.

“It is timely and it will enable the Magistracy to deliver justice in accordance with expectations of the people of the Northern Territory.”

The new facility has one court room with office space for staff, legal representatives and holding cells for youths appearing before the court.

The facility will allow youths, for the first time, to be detained in a holding cell that is set apart from adult offenders, bringing the facility in line with the Youth Justice Act.

The new court layout features an oval shaped table that is intended to be less intimidating and more conducive to dealing with youth offenders and those that come before the court in relation to child protection.

Other considerations made during the development phase, and included in the construction, are state-of-the-art steel holding cells, floor to ceiling slab walls and modern CCTV security systems.

The new Darwin Childrens Court will begin hearing cases on Monday 29 February.

C&R Construction was the successful contractor. Ten percent of the workforce on the project was Indigenous.

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