



**SUPREME COURT
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**
Stirling Gardens
Barrack Street
Perth WA 6000

MEDIA ALERT

26 October 1999

Aboriginal Cross-Cultural Program for JPs

Western Australia's senior judiciary are continuing the push to provide the State's Justices of the Peace with Aboriginal cultural training.

Esperance will host an Aboriginal cross Cultural Awareness program for Justices of the Peace next month.

It is the fourth in WA following successful programs in Kalgoorlie, Broome and Perth which attracted more than 110 Justices of the Peace. WA is the only State to offer such programs.

Fifteen Justices of the Peace are expected to attend the one-day conference being held at the St John Ambulance Centre in Esperance from 9am on Thursday, November 4.

The Hon. Justice Neville Owen of the Supreme Court will speak at the conference. He will be joined by the Supreme Court's Aboriginal liaison officer, Julie Jones; the Bay of Isles Aboriginal Corporation representative, Doc Reynolds, and representatives from Kalgoorlie's Aboriginal Legal Service, the Ministry of Justice and the Aboriginal Affairs Department.

Representatives from the Bay of Isles Aboriginal Corporation will perform the welcome.

The conference will address historical and cultural issues and their significance for those involved in the administration of justice.

Topics to be covered include language barriers, explaining court procedures in plain English, bail conditions, juvenile appearances, reasons for lack of appearance, Aboriginal history and the body language of Aboriginal people in court.

The conference is one of several judicial initiatives aims at improving access to the justice system by Aboriginal people and promoting an understanding by those who administer justice of the special needs of those people.

The programs are adapted from those presented to judges and magistrates since 1993.

Judges of the Supreme and District Court regularly visit remote Aboriginal communities while on circuit. Similar liaison occurs between the judiciary and metropolitan and south-west based Aboriginal community representatives.

Next year the Supreme Court will take the program to the Pilbara and other areas.

Media
Contact:

Sue McKenna or Val
Buchanan
(08) 9421 5303