

ADDRESS BY
HIS HONOUR MR TOM PAULING AO QC
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ON THE OCCASION OF
LAUNCH OF ENGINEERING WEEK 2008
Government House, Darwin
29 July 2008

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Government House and to the official launch of Engineering Week 2008 in the Northern Territory.

I acknowledge the Larrakia people and their ancestors, traditional owners of the land on which this house stands.

Engineering Week in the Territory is traditionally held in the Top End's glorious Dry Season. The clear skies and cooler weather herald the onset of outdoor activity and a lively social calendar. The Qantas Darwin Cup Gala Ball has already sold 3300 tickets, and the Cup itself is expected to attract a record crowd.

There is not an unsold seat for the rest of the carnival.

I don't know how you will find time to confer with your colleagues on engineering topics!

I note with interest that Engineer Australia's Northern Division, while the smallest division in terms of membership numbers, covers

the largest geographical area, including the Northern Territory, Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Since I am involved personally in a construction project in Bali, I may need your help!

In an earlier life I was selected by the forerunner of Engineers Australia Northern Division to be a judge in the *Engineering Excellence Awards*. It was a challenging and interesting task where nominations included Marrakai Apartments, the first overpass in the Territory at Bagot Road, rehabilitation of mine sites in Batchelor and some novel building techniques.

I think the Bagot Road Overpass was the first construction in the Territory to use Hydron 300 Anti-Graffiti System. In the current election cycle it might be good to spray some around.

In some categories we achieved consensus quickly and, in others, we entered into protracted debate where ultimately my lack of formal training in the discipline caused me to agree with those better qualified.

Some of the awardees went on to national honours and most projects have stood the test of time.

Engineering is one of the most dynamic and diverse of disciplines. It has enjoyed steady growth over the years thanks to supportive and encouraging youth programs that inspire a sense of excitement and enthusiasm about engineering.

Even Hamlet had a fondness for it. He tells his mother *“For tis sport to have the Engineer, hoist with his own petard”* A petard being a small hat shaped explosive device.

It is a discipline that has grown and specialised to reflect the worldwide transition to technology. We have seen engineering grow to accommodate areas such as aerospace, agriculture, computers, software, biomedicine, mining and the environment.

My own son Fred is in third year Engineering at the University of Queensland in a discipline called Mechatronics.

He is doing very well indeed in areas that boggle my mind. He has a science degree with IT specialisation, but on the day he went to Melbourne for the megabucks, the jobs went to Mumbai and Kolkata. I am sure that he will be happier as an engineer.

It is exciting stuff!

I am happy to welcome you today and I hope to see my son among your numbers in a few years.

On that note, it gives me great pleasure to officially launch Engineering Week 2008, and introduce Mr Peter Hagan, President of Engineers Australia Northern Division.

Thank you.