



17 August 2007

## **New Solicitor-General**

Leading barrister Michael Grant QC will be the Northern Territory's next Solicitor-General.

Attorney-General Syd Stirling said Mr Grant will take over from Mr Tom Pauling QC, who has served in the position since 1988.

"Michael Grant has a very strong litigation record and possesses all the qualities required in a leading Senior Counsel," Mr Stirling said.

"He is a fine barrister with the respect of the Australian legal fraternity. He has acted as a legal advisor to Government and has represented the Territory in various cases.

"He has big shoes to fill but I am sure he'll do a fine job," he said.

Mr Stirling has also thanked Tom Pauling for his long-term service to Government, and wider contribution to the Territory.

"For almost 20 years Mr Pauling has provided a separate, independent source of legal advice to the Attorney-General and Government, and represented the Territory in the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal Court, and High Court.

"For every major Native Title and lands rights case, as well as highly complex constitutional matters, he has represented the Territory with excellence, energy, and professionalism.

"In *NT v Mengel* he persuaded the High Court to overturn previous authority. He was also involved in leading Native Title cases such as *Ward*, *Yarmirr* (Croaker Island) and *Fejo*.

"His high quality advice and advocacy on behalf of the Territory has been appreciated, and the Territory Government wishes him the very best in his future endeavours.

"Mr Grant will formally take on the role on 1 November, but will act in the position from September while Mr Pauling takes well deserved long service leave.

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## **About Michael Grant QC**

Mr Grant was born in Darwin and spent his early years in Pine Creek. He undertook primary schooling in Darwin at St Mary's Primary School and St John's College. He was in Darwin during Cyclone Tracy and the following month commenced secondary schooling in Sydney as a boarder.

Mr Grant holds a Bachelor of Laws degree with first class honours conferred by the University of Queensland, having fulfilled the conditions prescribed by study at the then-Northern Territory University. He completed articles of clerkship with the then Northern Territory Attorney-General's Department.

He has worked for the Solicitor for the Northern Territory, where he had conduct of a range of important cases, including constitutional challenges to the euthanasia legislation (*Wake & Anor v Northern Territory of Australia & Anor* (1996) and mandatory sentencing legislation (*Wynbyne v Marshall* (1997)).

In 1998 he was appointed as Director of Litigation with the Northern Territory Attorney-General's Department and has acted as its Chief Executive Officer. He has also lectured in Law at the then-NTU and served as President of the Health Professional Review Tribunal.

Mr Grant joined the private Bar on 2 February 1999 and was appointed as a Queen's Counsel in 2006 – the first Territory-born practitioner to be commissioned as a QC in the Northern Territory. His practice has involved appellate work at all levels, including appearances before the High Court of Australia.

His father, Saus Grant, was an Assistant Commissioner of Police with the Northern Territory Police Force and his mother, Norma Grant, worked variously as a teacher and librarian in the Northern Territory for over 40 years.

## **About Tom Pauling QC**

Mr Tom Pauling QC has been the Solicitor-General since February 1988. He was first admitted to legal practice in New South Wales in 1969, and moved to the Territory in 1970. He jointly established the NT Bar in 1974, and served as a magistrate from 1977 until he re-joined the Bar in 1980. Mr Pauling was NT Bar Association President from 1980-87, and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1984.

He was also founding Chair of the then Darwin Entertainment Centre for 10 years from 1985. He has been Chair of the Racing Appeals Tribunal since 1991 and was Chair of the Museums and Art Galleries Board between 1994 and 1996.