

Local Court Act and Work Health Court
PRACTICE DIRECTION

CASE FLOW MANAGEMENT

The following Practice Direction is issued pursuant to section 21 of the *Local Court Act* and section 95 of the *Work Health Act* to apply from 1 October 1998 to Courts in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Background

Despite the best efforts of the Court, there are still matters coming to hearing which are adjourned or delayed because counsel involved have decided that pleadings require amendment, discovery is incomplete, witnesses are unavailable, etc. Counsel are often not briefed until shortly before the hearing, or if they are briefed in good time, it is often the case that they do not turn their minds to the case until shortly before the hearing. The following procedure is to address this problem.

Procedure

When a matter has been set down for a hearing of more than one day, it will then be referred to the List Clerk who will allocate the matter to a Magistrate. That Magistrate may call a confirmatory hearing, to be held in Court or Chambers, at any time before the hearing date. At this hearing parties will be expected to answer any questions that Magistrates may have about the preparedness of the matter.

Please note that this procedure does not take the place of pre-hearing conferences, at which the parties must also convince the court of preparedness for hearing, prior to the matter being set down.

HUGH BRADLEY
CHIEF MAGISTRATE

6 October 1998