

Australian speaking tour of Major Michael D Mori



Ian Brown, National President Elect, and Simon Morrison, National President, of the Australian Lawyers Alliance, with Major Michael D Mori

The Australian Lawyers Alliance was thrilled to host a series of public lectures by Major Michael D Mori, David Hicks' US Marine lawyer. The free public lectures were held in Brisbane on 3 November, Perth on 9 November and Sydney on 13 November.

Major Mori captivated his audiences, totalling up to 1,200 people, with an hour-long, stirring and informative presentation, highlighting the hypocrisies of the Australian

government's support for Hicks' detention for five years without valid charge or prospects of a trial. Major Mori stated that if the federal government requested Hicks' return to Australia, the US government would most likely comply. He spoke of the injustices that David Hicks has endured, including solitary confinement for the past two years, and the inhumane conditions in which he has been detained.

Major Mori used his gripping presentation to dispel many prevailing myths surrounding David Hicks in the media. He confirmed that David has served hard prison time, in tortuous conditions, emphasising that his treatment at the hands of the US government blatantly contravenes the Geneva Convention. He also spent some time describing the hypocritical terms of the recently passed *Military Commission Act*, which effectively suspends the effect of the Geneva Convention in respect of the US military's treatment of non-US citizens.

Major Mori answered a series of questions from the audience and spoke of how David Hicks' predicament is now more of a political issue than a legal one, and the importance of continually lobbying the government.

Major Mori, along with the Australian Lawyers Alliance, will continue to pressure the Australian government to protect its citizens' basic democratic rights, such as the presumption of innocence and habeus corpus.

The Australian Lawyers Alliance would like to thank our sponsors for making these free events possible: DG Thompson, Evidex, Furzer Crestani, ipac and LawMaster. ■

Fair compensation initiative

The NSW Fair Compensation Campaign is a joint initiative of the Australian Lawyers Alliance, the Law Society of NSW, the NSW Bar Association and the Law Council of Australia. The campaign was launched on 19 September 2006 in Sydney.

The aim of the campaign is to reduce legislative and other barriers to common-law rights and ensure a greater consistency of access to entitlements across the system. The campaign aims to increase awareness and understanding of compensation issues, foster community support for common-law rights, and lobby state politicians to implement the majority of recommendations of the upper house *Personal Injury Compensation Legislation Inquiry* in 2005.

The NSW government is not engaging in the debate on fair compensation at present and does not want it to become an election issue. However, the time has come to put pressure on not only the government, but opposition parties as well,

A Fair Go For Injured People



to address the injustice across the system. We encourage our NSW members to write to their local MPs, the leaders of the political parties and the responsible minister, John Della Bosca, to restore justice to compensation laws.

The Fair Compensation group also lobbied NSW country ALP members at their recent conference in Queanbeyan.

More information about the campaign is available through a link on our website at www.lawyersalliance.com.au. Letters to NSW parliamentarians can be sent straight from the campaign website. More launches are scheduled in regional NSW in the lead-up to the March 2007 election. ■