

Darwin Commercial Arbitration Centre

ON the 14 August, 1987 the Attorney General for the Northern Territory, The Honorable Daryl W. Manzie, M.L.A. formally declared open the Darwin Commercial Arbitration Centre.

During the course of the Official Opening the Attorney General said "Increasing world interest in international commercial arbitration has led to the development of a number of international commercial arbitration centres in this region.

Australia's existing trade links with Japan, and growing trade links with China and closer South-East Asian countries, suggest that there is enormous potential for international commercial arbitration in Australia.

There is also clear evidence of a significantly increasing demand for domestic commercial arbitration.

AUSTRALIA AS A VENUE FOR INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATIONS
Australia, which is an important South-East Asian country, has a number of advantages as a venue for an international arbitration centre.

It is readily accessible, by sea or air, from any part of the world.

It provides a broad range of financial and manufacturing services and has developed a large pool of professionals, which is essential to the international commercial arbitration process.

The Institute of Arbitrators Australia has worked hard at rapidly developing a pool of accredited arbitrators, experienced in a wide variety of disciplines, from all parts of Australia. The Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (ACICA) has built on this work by developing a panel of experienced international arbitrators, drawn from Australia and many other countries.

Australia is also fortunate in having a large number of highly competent lawyers who will promote arbitration as a means of dispute resolution and assist the process as solicitors, advocates or arbitrators.

Recently some retired judges and eminent senior counsel have readily agreed to act as arbitrators or to become members of the ACICA panel. The same is true of senior members of other professions.

Arrangements are being made for experienced international arbitrators and other experts from leading European and United States centres to assist further in the training of international arbitrators.

IMPARTIALITY—AN IMPORTANT ASPECT

It is clear that impartiality is an essential aspect of international arbitration.

There is little doubt that the professional standing of those engaged in any aspect of arbitration at the ACICA will ensure absolute impartiality. The international community already appreciates that impartiality and fair treatment is its trademark. This, when combined with its other advantages and the neutrality of the forum, ensures that the ACICA is an attractive venue,

particularly for third country arbitrators.

THE AUSTRALIAN SCENE

The Northern Territory Government has followed a similar course to that of the Victorian Government in Victoria in assisting the establishment of the ACICA in Darwin.

The ACICA is in the course of establishing centres in all States and the Northern Territory—Centres that are managed and controlled by the local Chapter of the Institute in the same way as the national ACICA organisation is controlled by the Council of The Institute of Arbitrators Australia.

In this way it is hoped that domestic commercial arbitration and other forms of dispute resolution will be assisted in all parts of the country.

At the same time, Australia's international attraction as an arbitration venue will be increased by the establishment of a national network of ACICA centres.

And it is also intended to assist regional centres in developing arbitration work, particularly Darwin with its potential for attracting smaller international arbitrations from neighbouring countries.

The centre, as you can see, consists of a hearing room with three adjoining offices for the arbitrators and the parties.

It will be managed by The Institute of Arbitrators, Northern Territory Chapter.

Support facilities will be available by arrangement, and the full resources of the ACICA and The Institute of Arbitrators Australia nationally will be available to advise and assist as necessary.

It is the firm policy of both the Northern Territory Government and the ACICA that its facilities are available to parties to conduct arbitrations and other forms of disputes resolution according to the rules of their choice however, an immediate international advantage of ACICA is its access to the Rules of the London Court of International Arbitration, with ACICA administration.

The Centre in Darwin will be administered locally by a separate company ACICA (N.T.) the directors of which will be nominated by The Institute of Arbitrators Australia, Law Society of the Northern Territory, Northern Territory Bar Association and the Territory Attorney General".

COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION SEMINAR IN DARWIN

Coinciding with the opening of the Darwin Commercial Arbitration Centre, The Institute of Arbitrators Australia conducted a full day arbitration seminar in Darwin.

The programme was presented by—

Mr F. J. Shelton, Senior Vice-President, The Institute of Arbitrators Australia and Vice President of the Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration; and

Mr A. A. de Fina, President, Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration and a member of Council, The Institute of Arbitrators Australia both of whom were interviewed on the local Television Channels about Arbitration and the advantages of settling disputes using this method.