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## **Bushfires, tobacco and asbestos laws discussed at upcoming Australian Lawyers Alliance conference**

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Tuesday, 11 May, 2010

More than 200 lawyers will converge on Torquay, this weekend, to examine the cutting edge of personal injury law and its application in bushfires, tobacco and asbestos related cases as part of the annual Australian Lawyers Alliance Victorian Conference.

Speakers at the conference, on Friday, May 14 and Saturday, May 15, include: council assisting the royal commission into the 2009 Victorian bushfires, barrister, Jack Rush RFD QC, who will discuss the law relating to injury and bushfires, tobacco and asbestos; and Maurice Blackburn principal, Andrew Dimsey, who will present Lung Cancer, Asbestos and Smoking: The Lay of the Land after Ellis.

Isaacs Chambers barrister, Anita Spitzer, will discuss *Testator's Family Maintenance Act* applications; and general insurance ombudsman, John Price, will speak on Alternative Dispute Resolution: Access to Justice and the Role of Lawyers.

Also on the agenda will be: Liability of Occupiers to Independent Contractors and Their Employees: Recent Developments, discussed by barrister, Ian McDonald; and Dependency: After the Hanks Report discussed by barrister Greg Wicks, both of Owen Dixon Chambers.

The popular annual case reviews, general damages and the Implications of ACA Amendments on Proceedings in the Magistrates Court; Failure To Warn: Restatement of Principles in *Paterno v Hookey*; and Transport Accident Commission and WorkCover panel discussions, form the rest of the program.

Alliance Victorian president, Geraldine Collins, said the conference was a prime event on the Victorian legal calendar, with some lawyers travelling interstate to take part.

"The conference is an important annual event for any lawyers wanting to stay abreast of the most topical issues affecting their clients' ability to access to justice, particularly in the area of personal injury law," Ms Collins said.

**For more details contact: Australian Lawyers Alliance, public affairs manager, Mandy Wyer on 0418 270 656 or Alliance Victorian president, Geraldine Collins, 0407 079 867.**