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## **Australian Lawyers Alliance Queensland Conference highlights needs of injured**

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Tuesday, 23 February, 2010

More than 300 lawyers and academics from all over Queensland gathered at the Sheraton Mirage Resort on the Gold Coast, on the weekend to discuss the importance of preserving common-law rights for injured people.

Alliance Queensland president, Justin Harper, told a packed audience that proposed changes to the Queensland WorkCover scheme had recently been mooted and it was important to ensure common-law rights were maintained in Queensland.

“The Alliance has been working hard to ensure the significance of common-law rights is fully understood and preserved in this state, not eroded as it has been in others,” Mr Harper said.

He said such rights were crucial in ensuring injured people could pay their bills and put food on the table; and also made good economic sense.

“Common law ensures there is no unnecessary reopening of claims and appeals that would otherwise burden the effective use of the justice system,” Mr Harper said.

Keynote speaker at the conference opening, on Friday, was Hon Justice Duncan McMeekin, from the Supreme Court of Queensland who gave a detailed presentation on, ‘Expert Evidence and Expert Evidence Rules’ which was not without humour, incorporating recent holiday photographs from Africa, to bring his points across to an amused audience.

Three separate streams of lectures and presentations were hosted at the conference which concluded on Saturday afternoon. Other topics include: the Civil Liability Amendment Act 2009 and what it would mean for plaintiffs and insurers; discussion on personal impairment assessment and the commercial reality of injury and employment.

Workplace Psychiatric injury; preparation for trial; an overview of the cause of action under the Workplace Health and Safety Act; and 30 recent significant litigation cases were also discussed.

Mr Harper said the annual conference was always a popular event with lawyers from all over the state attending in a bid to further their knowledge and better represent their clients.

The Australian Lawyers Alliance is a non-profit organisation with more than 1400 members Australia-wide. It lobbies government to change laws that affect people’s ability to access justice and began in 1994 to help protect personal injury victims who were having their common law rights eroded by government decisions.

**For more details contact: Australian Lawyers Alliance, public affairs manager, Mandy Wyer on 0418 270 656.**