

Media Release

Legal body awards Beer top gong

BREAKING NEWS, BRISBANE - The Queensland Law Society has tonight awarded Cairns solicitor Russell Beer its most prestigious accolade to acknowledge his contribution to the New Deal campaign for Cairns at their annual QLS President's Awards.

The Outstanding Achievement by a Legal Practitioner Award is well regarded within the legal industry and indicates the legal profession's encouragement of solicitors providing not only legal services to clients but making a real difference in the community which supports them.

In September 2009, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd urged world leaders to remember the human face of the global financial crisis as he addressed the UN in New York. He invoked the suffering of workers in Cairns when imploring fellow leaders to find a path out of the global recession.

Cairns hit back at the economic crisis engulfing the region with a dramatic three-point plan aimed at stimulating the economy and reducing the high unemployment rate.

At the centre of this fight-back is Russell Beer, who is collaborating with others in positions of influence in the city to find solutions and work with key stakeholders at a variety of levels.

The Relief, Recovery and Reform Plan is a united effort by Advance Cairns, Tourism Tropical North Queensland and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce with the backing of the Cairns Regional Council.

As Advance Cairns chairman, Mr Beer has been reported as stating the New Deal proposal was not a "whinge" or a call for a multi-million dollar handout.

"We recognise that we have to be part of developing the solution," he said.

"Our proposals may be seen as a bit wild, but we think we have to be a bit wild," Mr Beer said.

Russell Beer's knowledge of the Cairns region sees him chair the region's major organisations AFL Cairns and Advance Cairns. In recent times, Mr Beer's main area of legal practice has involved giving advice to businesses, local authorities, statutory bodies and government owned corporations on commercial matters and revenue and business law issues. But his legal expertise is also mirrored by a passion around the people and the business community he works in.

Mr Beer also acts as Corporate Solicitor for a range of significant North Queensland associations and institutions. He has acted for numerous research and development syndicates, including involvement in the preparation of syndicate financing and security documentation, obtaining approval from the R&D Board and private tax ruling from the ATO. He

has also acted for North Queensland local authorities on the privatisation of waste collection services and in relation to the Far North Queensland Regional Waste Project.

Mr Beer has also been the Relationship Partner for many of MacDonnells Law's foundation clients – clients who have been with the firm for over 100 years.

He has presented numerous papers at seminars and conferences on topics ranging from GST for local authorities, to succession and estate planning for cane farmers, and Informed Consent and Powers of Attorney for the medical profession.

Mr Beer dedicates much of his time to community and voluntary work in the Cairns region and is on several boards and committees, including Chairman of Advance Cairns, Chairman of AFL Cairns, Board member of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cairns, Cairns Chapter of the Property Council of Australia and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Member of the Marine & Tropical Science Research Facility Ministerial Advisory Council.

The categories for the 2009 President's Christmas Cocktails and Awards included:

- Outstanding achievement by a legal practitioner - Legal and/or Community
- Outstanding achievement by a young lawyer (less than seven years PAE) - Legal and/or Community
- Agnes McWhinney Award for outstanding contribution by a female lawyer to the legal profession
- Pro Bono Awards for outstanding professional service to socially and economically disadvantaged members of the Queensland community

In what is a coup for local law firm MacDonnells Law, the QLS has also awarded the firm the Employer of Choice (Regional Queensland) Award for 2009.

Mr Beer's accolade adds to Partner Luckbir Singh's award in 2008 for Outstanding Achievement by a Young Lawyer at the QLS President's Awards.

About MacDonnells Law

MacDonnells Law has offices in Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville and is one of Queensland's largest independent law firms. It is a full service legal firm with specialist lawyers practising in specific areas of law. It has a long history as a respected institution and celebrates its 125th Anniversary in 2009. MacDonnells Law is also a member of the international alliance of commercial law firms, Meritas. Meritas operates on alliances between firms in more than 60 countries working across jurisdictions to provide clients the best of both worlds: a local legal partner with full service capabilities and the cost efficiency and personal attention unmatched by mega law firms. Each member law firm is required to adhere to rigorous and specific service standards. For more information on MacDonnells Law, please visit www.macdonnells.com.au

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