



Australian Bar Association

19 June 2007

Major Mori to receive honorary membership of ABA

The Australian Bar Association will present Major Michael D Mori USMC with Honorary Membership at its Conference dinner on 29 June 2007.

The award of honorary membership made for exceptional service to justice and the rule of law is due recognition of Major Mori's passionate and fearless advocacy for Guantanamo Bay detainee David Hicks.

Stephen Estcourt QC, President of the Australian Bar Association, said: "This award of honorary membership recognises the work done by Dan Mori in consistently seeking to have his client dealt with fairly and in accordance with the rule of law. It is the time-honoured role for an advocate to stand between the state and an individual. Major Mori did that and did it in the best tradition of an advocate."

Michael Dante Mori (born October 4, 1965) is a major in the United States Marine Corps. He spent four years in the enlisted ranks, reporting for training at the USMC Recruit Depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. After attending Norwich University, a military college, he became an officer in the Marine Corps. In 1994 he graduated from the Western New England College School of Law in Springfield, Massachusetts, before being admitted to the Bar in Massachusetts. He is married and has twin boys. A sister lives in Australia.

Mori was appointed by the United States Department of Defence to represent Hicks in November 2003, and continued to handle Hicks's case until May 2007. Mori has been featured on numerous occasions in the Australian media in relation to developments in Hicks's case, and he frequently expressed concern over Hicks's extended interrogations and the delays in bringing his client to trial.

Major Mori has defended his client in the public and political sphere both in Australia and the USA. He was one of the 2005 recipients of the American Civil Liberties Union's Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty Award, which was presented "to the five military defence lawyers who represented the first round of defendants at the Guantánamo Bay tribunals and challenged the entire military commission system."

On November 10, 2006 Mori attended the signing of the Fremantle Declaration by the Attorneys-General of the States and Territories of Australia. The declaration urges judicial fairness to protect the legal rights of Australians at home and abroad. Mori said "It's disheartening that federal ministers won't fight for an Australian citizen to have the same rights as an American."

On February 15, 2004, during an interview for one of Australia's leading current affairs television programs, Mori summarized his passionate belief in justice and the rule of law: "America's always had a proud tradition of ensuring fairness and due process. Now's not the time to sacrifice those values."

Following Hicks's departure from Guantanamo Bay to complete his sentence in Yatala Prison, South Australia in mid May 2007 - Mori was re-assigned as a staff judge advocate, or legal adviser, to the commanders of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego.

Media inquiries: Chris Winslow, Australian Bar Association mob 0409 245 369

Mr Stephen Escourt, President, Australian Bar Association mob 0419 388 997