

Swearing-in of the Honourable Justices Dutney, Mullins and Holmes
as Judges of the Supreme Court of Queensland
Monday 20 March 2000
9.00am Banco Court

Address by the Hon Paul de Jersey, Chief Justice of Queensland

I note with pleasure the presence of Judges of the District Court and the Federal and Family Courts, the President and Deputy Presidents of the Land and Resources Tribunal, the Chief Magistrate and Magistrates, and retired Judges of the Supreme Court. The Chief Judge particularly wishes me to explain that she is necessarily absent, conducting criminal proceedings in Cairns. May I also note the presence of Justice Matsutani of the Tokushima District Court, Japan, who is visiting the Supreme Court of Queensland this week. Some Judges of the Supreme Court cannot be present here today: all would wish to be associated with what I am about to say.

I am very pleased to welcome to the Supreme Court three Judges whose learning, experience and wisdom amply fit them for this high office.

That as many as three Judges are now appointed does not signal an enlargement of the Court. Two of the appointments reflect the forthcoming retirements of the Central Judge, Justice Demack, and Mr Justice Derrington. The third appointment is consequent upon the retirement on 10 March of Mr Justice Shepherdson.

Justice Dutney on 19 May this year will become the Central Judge upon the retirement of Justice Demack, after 22 years service in that role. In the meantime Justice Dutney will sit substantially in Brisbane. Special significance attends the position of Central Judge. The Central Judge leads the central Queensland legal profession and holds a position of considerable public consequence for the central Queensland community. Justice Dutney will become only the 11th Judge to have held that position since 20 December 1895. He is well qualified to discharge the duties of the office with distinction. He was educated at Charleville and Taringa State Schools, then Brisbane Boys College and the University of Queensland from which he graduated in law and arts, majoring in history. After two years as a solicitor, he commenced practice at the Bar in 1979. Eleven years later he was appointed as Queens Counsel.

While His Honour has had broad experience in all relevant fields of litigation, including the criminal law, his focus as a silk fell upon the area of commercial law.

He is married, with two sons. His recreations incidentally include marathons and triathalons, which will further equip him to endure the sometimes gruelling

demands of his new office.

Justice Mullins received her secondary education at the Coorparoo State High School, subsequently graduating from the University of Queensland with degrees in commerce and law, ultimately securing last year the degree of Master of Laws (Advanced). Following four years as a solicitor, Her Honour was admitted as a barrister in 1984. She also has had broad experience in the field of litigation, with a special interest in commercial and property matters. Her expertise in property law led to her appearing as counsel for the State of Queensland in a number of native title cases, including Wik. She was appointed Senior Counsel in 1998. Her Honour has been a part-time member of the Queensland Building Tribunal since 1994, and a part-time member of the Queensland Law Reform Commission since 1996. Her professional interest has extended to her being, since 1995, a member of the Equalising Opportunities in the Law Committee of the Law Council of Australia, and since 1996, convenor of the Equal Opportunities Panel of the Bar Association of Queensland. She has also been a member of the Committee of the Bar Association since 1998, and a member of the Council of the Cannon Hill Anglican College since 1997. Her Honour is married with three children.

Justice Holmes has extensive academic qualifications: in 1977 she graduated in economics from the Australian National University, in 1980 in law from the University of Queensland, with a graduate diploma in legal practice in 1983 from the Queensland Institute of Technology, in arts with honours in 1989 from the University of Queensland, and Master of Laws (Advanced) from the University of Queensland in 1998. She was admitted as a solicitor in 1982, and commenced practice as a barrister in 1986. Her Honour's spread of professional application has been broad, with a special focus on administrative law. She held a commission to prosecute from 1990.

From 1994 she was a part-time member of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, for a period of 3 months last year served as an Acting District Court Judge, and over a period of 8 months in 1998 and 1999, was counsel assisting the Forde Commission of Inquiry into Child Abuse. In 1997 she was appointed Deputy President of the Queensland Community Corrections Board. She is a foundation member of the Women's Legal Service. Her Honour is married with three children.

I congratulate all three judges and warmly wish them well as they enter this new challenging chapter in their careers and their lives.

Mr Attorney?