



## Opening of new Caloundra courthouse Tuesday, 16 August 2005, 10am

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**The Hon P de Jersey AC,  
Chief Justice**

Attorney, local members, Chief Magistrate, Director General, Mayor, ladies and gentlemen.

I too acknowledge the traditional ownership of the lands of the region, and I am very pleased to add my commendation in respect of this excellent new facility.

At an immediate level, our new Caloundra courthouse exudes what should be a predominant feature of the contemporary justice system – accessibility. By definition, courthouses cannot be “friendly” places. But at least they should not be intimidating. This is a fine public building of which the people will be proud: it reflects the vibrant style which characterizes the district. In addition, for those who have to enter the courthouse, the presentation of the building should help quell anxiety. I am sure, by the way, the “arrow of justice” won’t hamper that. It’s in fact refreshing to see some imaginative symbolism of our mission. Maybe we will come to see the “arrow of justice” replace “Themis” on news presentations.

Which brings me to a second important feature of the building, and that is, technological advancement. That feature critically fosters accessibility. Here, vulnerable witnesses can be appropriately accommodated; witnesses and persons in custody far afield will in due course, by video link, be saved the inconvenience of substantial travel; and the Registry is geared for efficient modern treatment of files and documents.

It is good to see full courthouse facilities restored to Caloundra. Maroochydhore will be relieved, though I’m sure they have been very accommodating over the last few years.

This fine courthouse is the latest in a series of similar new developments around the State. The magnificent new Magistrates Court building in Brisbane is proving a wonderful facility. Additionally, however, it is reassuring to see a real commitment on the part of executive



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government to the development of non-metropolitan facilities in this importantly decentralized State, and being prepared to spend a good deal of money to secure something publicly memorable.

For about 15 years of my early life, my family annually spent a month here in Caloundra over the Christmas break. I have a great personal, nostalgic attachment to the district. I confess I was not then even remotely aware of the courthouse – as a boy, my interest in public buildings focused more on the grand post office building at the top of Bulcock Street, located coincidentally between the picture theatre and the skating rink. I was unaware of the old courthouse which dwelt opposite the cinema. The cinema then was the “Strand”, on the same site as Caloundra Cinemas now.

Unfortunately these days for one reason or another younger people are acutely aware of their local courthouses. I am reassured this one presents as a facility directed more towards overall community advancement than sterile retribution.

I congratulate the government on another fine construction: also, as a long-term admirer of the region, I express my personal satisfaction that Caloundra in particular should be the beneficiary of such a worthwhile, indeed splendid new development.