



QUEENSLAND
COURTS

Admission Ceremonies

11 December 2008

1st ceremony

CHIEF JUSTICE'S OBSERVATIONS

On behalf of all the Judges of the Supreme Court, I congratulate you, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome you to the ranks of the legal profession.

Your personal achievement is substantial. We Judges were admitted as barristers many years ago, but the demanding course of meticulous study prerequisite to admission as a legal practitioner never departs one's recollection; and in addition, you have completed the required practical training, which we hope you found both interesting and helpful. Your present achievement is however but the herald for a lifetime of professional development. The most effective lawyers – those who best serve their clients - are those who continue, throughout their professional lives, to broaden their professional knowledge. They are also persons who maintain a broad involvement in life, rather than a narrow absorption with the law.

Today you join a noble profession with a substantial commitment to public service including, with increasing reach, the provision of services pro bono to those of limited financial means.

The ethical standards which characterize the profession in Queensland are high, and the court is vigilant to ensure the profession continues to acknowledge and fulfil its high ethical obligation, and the discharge of its duty to clients with competence and expertise.

We hope, ladies and gentlemen, that you rise to these substantial challenges. Your prospects will be enhanced if you continue to draw support from those who have, more than likely, assisted you greatly to this present pinnacle: your families and friends, so many of whom we welcome here this morning to share your sense of fulfilment.

Some of you may not enter into legal practice as such. We are sure you will in that event nevertheless continue to appreciate the mental acuity and moral commitment which underpin your new qualifications.

We again wish you well in your careers, and the compliments of the festive season.

Would you please be seated?

Before I conclude these remarks, it is important that we acknowledge the voluntary contribution made by the members of the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board. The Board comprises Mr Greg Moroney (Chair), Mr James Bell QC (Deputy Chairperson), Mr Liam Kelly SC, Ms Jennifer Rosengren, Mr Noel Jensen, Ms Joan Bennett, Ms Imelda Bradley and the Deputy Director of Courts, Ms Julie Steel. Ms Timmins is the Board's secretary.

The Board discharges a large workload. For example, in preparing for eight admission ceremonies over the course of the last 12 months, the board has examined some 835 applications for admission, 159 being heard today. Of those applications, 57 were dealt with regionally, 21 in Cairns, 27 in Townsville and 9 in Rockhampton.

The Board has taken on substantial additional tasks, including registering 89 supervised trainees over the course of the year, reviewing the Griffith University Undergraduate Law Program, approving the Queensland University of Technology National Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, assisting its Victorian counterpart in the implementation of a supervised traineeship scheme based on the Queensland model, recommending amendments to the *Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004*, working towards the establishment of a single assessing body in relation to the qualifications of overseas practitioners seeking admission here, and active involvement in the consideration of a range of issues being dealt with nationally by the Law Admissions Consultative Committee.

The members of the Board give substantially of their time and their work – very much in the public interest – is of great assistance to the court. I commend its members for their valuable public service.

Admissions Ceremony
11 December 2008
2nd ceremony

On behalf of the Judges, ladies and gentlemen, we congratulate you upon your admission to the legal profession. Your admission is confirmation of substantial intellectual achievement and a good deal of persistence and application. You are to be commended for reaching this important milestone, and no doubt you will gratefully acknowledge the support of your parents, families and friends.

You join a large profession. With a finite amount of legal work, albeit in an economically bustling State, conditions within the profession are therefore quite competitive. To succeed, and shine, in this new competitive milieu, you should regard your present qualifications as but a start, as the foundation for a body of legal knowledge and wisdom to be developed throughout your professional lives.

Your being admitted formally today by the Supreme Court reflects this Court's role as the ultimate determinant and custodian of legal professional standards. Just as it has fallen to the Judges to authorise courses of legal study and determine admission standards, so we pass from time to time upon issues of fitness to practise. We expect much of you: integrity, legal understanding, sound judgment, practical wisdom, and not the least, moral courage –all dedicated to your efficient service of the people who will depend upon your expert capacities for the resolution of their difficulties. But in the end, while the interests of the clients are extremely important, it is of course your duty to the Court and the administration of the law which must predominate: it is that predominance which distinguishes the legal profession from others.

If you do not enter into legal practice as such, I hope you will nevertheless continue to draw inspiration from the jurisprudential training which has led you to this point: it should have induced a dimension of mental acuity and moral perception of enduring value.

As you rightly bask today in the lustre of your achievements, we know you will remember not only those you are destined to serve, but also those who have helped you to the position you now enjoy, especially as I have said, your parents, families and friends. We hope they will remain, for you, important sources of encouragement and wise counsel.

You go forward now with our congratulations and best wishes.

Admissions Ceremony
11 December 2008
3rd ceremony

The admission of legal practitioners at the beginning and end of the calendar year is an encouraging signal of the continuity of the legal profession which serves the people of Queensland so well. We welcome you to the ranks of that profession, and wish you well as you exercise new privileges and embrace new responsibilities.

You will be challenged to develop and demonstrate considerable talent as you enter what is a substantial and competitive profession.

Today is not the occasion for a lecture on professional ethics, but we hope you will always recognize that you owe your professional legitimacy to the court, and your overriding duty borne to the court notwithstanding the interests of the client. We hope that you will also acknowledge the goal of public service which underpins your new professionalism, and be astute to the plight of the under privileged within our community: the professional associations, and many of the firms, run active and well-developed pro bono schemes which should be of interest to you.

If you choose not to pursue a practising career, you will nevertheless we are confident always value your qualification: it signifies substantial personal achievement, and bespeaks mental acuity and ethical commitment.

We know you would wish us to acknowledge the contribution made to your present achievement by your families and friends. We welcome them to the Banco Court today. They must remain sources of encouragement, inspiration and wise advice as you move forward.

On behalf of all of the Judges, we again congratulate you and wish you well as you exercise these qualifications, and extend the compliments of the festive season.

Admissions Ceremony 11 December 2008 5th ceremony

On behalf of all the Judges, we welcome you, ladies and gentlemen, to the legal profession.

You are to be commended for your successful completion of a demanding academic course and substantial practical training requirements. Now you face the challenge of

deploying your professional talents to assist those who need expert help in the resolution of their legal problems.

We hope you acknowledge public service as the real essence of your new professionalism, and that you recognize an obligation to assist those without power or privilege in our community – and we mean, by a healthy commitment to pro bono work.

You join a large profession: there are presently just over 7,500 solicitors with practising certificates in Queensland, and 1,167 members of the Queensland Bar Association. Until today, the Court of Appeal had this year admitted as many as 645 new practitioners. Conditions in the practising profession are consequently quite competitive. You should therefore regard your present qualification, important though it is, as but the gateway to an avenue of lifelong professional development. We are confident those of you who do not enter the practising profession will nevertheless always benefit from the intellectual rigour and moral acuity which lie at the foundation of your new qualification.

Your professional development will be facilitated, by the way, through collegial interaction. The more senior members of the profession are generous with their time for novice practitioners, and the professional associations are anxious to assist you.

You are now officers of the Supreme Court, in one sense a rather quaint description, but a description which highlights the primacy of your duty ethically owed to the court, a duty which predominates over even the duty to the client.

In wishing you well, we acknowledge the important role your parents, families and friends will have played in assisting you to this point. We welcome all of your supporters to the Banco Court today, and express thanks for their indirect contribution to the development of the legal system in this State.

We conclude, ladies and gentlemen, by wishing you all a happy, restful and safe Christmas season.
