

Valedictory Ceremony

The Hon. Judges Richard Jones and David Reid

Friday, 17 September 2021 at 9:15am

Banco Court

QEll Court Building, Brisbane

- May it please the Court.
- I am very glad to be here this morning, on behalf of the solicitors of Queensland, to recognise the judicial careers of two fine judges of this Court.
- The District Court is perennially busy, and as its name suggests, it serves the people of Queensland, irrespective of where, in our large and decentralised state they live.
- Judges retiring from this Court have worked hard to deliver justice according to law, not just in our major population centres, but in many remoter locations.

- Your Honours have presided over complex and intractable civil disputes, and you have been the individuals charged with delivering sanction, on behalf of the community, in many serious, complex and often tragic criminal law cases.
- This is a unique form of service to the community, and a heavy burden which you have borne on our behalf.
- This morning, as you set down that burden, it is an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate your service.

- **Judge Jones**, since shortly after your appointment to the District Court, you have also served as a judge of the Planning and Environment Court.
- Your experience at the bar and as a member of the Land Court equipped you well for that role.
- The Planning and Environment Court is recognised as an exemplary environment court by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).
- You are recognised as an exemplary judge of that court, by the solicitors of Queensland.
- We particularly want to acknowledge your unfailing courtesy and patience in your dealings with all who appeared before you, whether counsel, solicitors, experts or unrepresented parties.
- We also wish to acknowledge your practical and common sense approach to planning and environment matters.

- I am told you ran a happy Court where legal representatives felt they were given the opportunity to do their best
- If you had one characteristic that sometimes caught practitioners unawares, it was that you hated to be kept waiting. Practitioners who were shy or retiring and not anxious to run to the bar table would sometimes be greeted with the refrain *“if someone does not come forward and announce their appearance I will adjourn the Court”*, while you glanced at the judges exit.
- This was effective, and it was never necessary for you to make good on your threat.
- Cases heard by you ran smoothly, without any fuss, and judgements were delivered in a timely manner.
- While this may not seem remarkable, when repeated, day after day, year after year, it becomes not only remarkable, but greatly valued.
- You will be missed.

- **Judge Reid**, after your initial time at the bar, where you quickly became a leading junior in personal injuries matters, you spent some time as a solicitor.
- I understand that you made this change, not only because of all of the attractions of our branch of the profession, but because it allowed you to spend more time with your family and be a more present father to your children.
- It also allowed you to combine a career as a chicken farmer with a life in the law. I am told that this was a very successful combination.
- Your strong analytical skills and fine legal judgement made you a valued part time solicitor, although the trail of hay you sometimes left in your wake as you walked the corridors was perplexing for the office cleaners on Eagle Street.

- After a decade as a solicitor, you returned to the bar where you re-established a very successful practice, until your appointment to the bench.
- Throughout your career, including your time on the bench, you have you have been known for your ability to make complex issues simple, your unfailing courtesy, and your deep and personal commitment to equality.
- You have quietly mentored lawyers from less advantaged backgrounds, and you have been a strong contributor to the court's committees with an equal justice focus.
- You have been an exemplar of the efficient, respectful and wise exercise of judicial power, and you have made a significant contribution to ensuring equal justice, according to law, for all who come to court.
- You, also will be missed.

- As Your Honours leave the Court, the solicitors of Queensland wish to record our gratitude for your service.
- Not only for what you have done – performing a difficult and challenging role - but for how have done it.
- You have each discharged your oaths of office conscientiously, courteously and generously.
- We wish you well in your retirement.
- May it please the Court.