



**Welcome Ceremony:
Hon. Justice Declan Kelly QC**

**Friday, 10 September 2021, 9.15 am
Banco Court, QEII Court Complex
George St, Brisbane**

- May it please the court.
- I am privileged to be here today, on behalf of the solicitors of Queensland, to welcome your Honour to your new role on the bench.
- The people of Queensland are indeed well served when a leading practitioner at the peak of their career is willing to take on the yoke of public service by accepting a commission as a judge of this Court.
- Of course, appointment to the bench is recognition of an outstanding contribution and achievement as a legal practitioner.

- It is a moment to take satisfaction in past achievements, and a time for celebration and pride for family and friends.
- But it is also a solemn occasion because it marks the beginning of a new call to service for the judge appointed.
- It is a call that requires the judge to muster all the power of their intellect, all their wisdom, all their compassionate understanding of the human condition, and all their humility, in fidelity to the service of the administration of justice.
- Today, we can be confident that your Honour is very well equipped to answer this call to service.

- As we have heard, the power of your intellect was recognised by the awarding of the University medal, honed by your studies at Oxford, and has been demonstrated ever since in your successful career at the bar.
- You have rich experience of life outside the law, in family and community.
- Your friends report that you worked from home long before others did, and very long before it was enforced by COVID. You did this so that you could be a fully involved parent to your four children, and so that both you and Sarah could pursue the careers that realised your collective and prodigious talents.
- While a private person, and never the life of the party, I am told that you are always the person who laughs the loudest, and you are known for your warmth and genuine interest in others.

- Although not noted on your CV, your achievements have extended to the sporting field, where you demonstrated considerable talent, and if your talent was lacking but the team needed you anyway, you demonstrated bravery and determination.
- All of these are components of a life of generosity, and the accretion of wisdom.
- You are known to be a humble person who, when the spotlight shines on you, quickly seeks to divert attention elsewhere.
- Your considerable acts of charity and compassion are not trumpeted.
- To the public, it can seem odd to talk of the quality of humility as an important quality in a judge. But the humble, respectful, and patient exercise of judicial power is essential to public respect for the rule of law.

- It also makes the legal practitioners who appear before you much less anxious.
- Among solicitors, your Honour has been well-known for your calm demeanour, your collegiality, and your compassion.
- In particular, you have been known for the respectful manner in which you treated all of the people you dealt with during a matter, whether with you or against you.
- Your instructing solicitors have consistently appreciated your Honour's capacity to make their job easier, by your professional courtesy and guidance and by providing a good description of what you required in a brief.
- This clarity about what you require will be prized by those appearing before you in Court and will no doubt speed the wheels of justice.

- Those who have known you from a young age speak of you holding positions of leadership not because you relentlessly sought them out, but simply because those around you recognised the combination of intellect and personal qualities that made you someone they wanted to follow. There was something inevitable about you taking on those roles.
- In the same way, a review of your Honour's CV and your professional achievements may make it seem that your appointment to the bench was inevitable.
- But of course, it was not inevitable, it depended on you being prepared to step into this life of service.
- For your willingness to do this, the solicitors of Queensland thank you. You have our support and we wish you well in your time on the Court.
- May it please the Court.