

**THE HON. JUSTICE DEREK PRICE AM**  
**CHIEF JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**  
**ANNOUNCEMENT OF SENIOR COUNSEL**

**23 OCTOBER 2017**

- 1 On behalf of myself and the judges of the District Court, I congratulate you upon your appointment as Senior Counsel. I also welcome the Clerks of the Floor and any family members who are here this morning.
  
- 2 Gregory Richard Waugh SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1990, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and equity. I am reliably informed that you are an avid golfer and that despite your tendency to drive off the tee with a raking hook, you won the golf competition at the Australian a week ago. It was suggested by Judge Chris Hoy SC, that your elevation to Silk must be most agreeable.
  
- 3 I regret to say that my intelligence concerning all other Senior Counsel present this morning, does not extend, you'll be pleased to hear, to your recreational activities.
  
- 4 Lesley Anne Whalan SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1998, you have made your reputation primarily in professional negligence litigation, commissions of inquiry and coronial inquests.
  
- 5 Michael Luscombe Wright SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2000, you have made your reputation primarily in environment and planning, native title, and administrative law. Your professional experience includes practise as a solicitor in Papua New Guinea.
  
- 6 Melissa Anne Gillies SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2001, you have made your reputation primarily in family law and the law of succession.
  
- 7 Michael Robert Elliott SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2002, you have made your reputation primarily in professional negligence litigation,

corporations law, and equity. In 2015, you were counsel assisting the Heydon Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption.

- 8 Naomi Louise Sharp SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2002, you have made your reputation primarily in competition and consumer law, contract, public and administrative law and discrimination law. In 2014, you were counsel assisting the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention.
- 9 Richard Craig Scruby SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2002, you have made your reputation primarily in equity, commercial, insolvency and tax law. In 2015, you were junior counsel assisting the Heydon Royal Commission.
- 10 Francis Paul Hicks SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2003, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial technology and construction disputes, retail and industrial law.
- 11 Huw Baker SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2005, you have made your reputation primarily as a Crown Prosecutor, both as trial and appellate counsel.
- 12 Dr Ruth Clare Anne Higgins SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2006, you have made your reputation primarily in competition and consumer law, economic regulatory law (especially energy and telecommunications) and class action proceedings.
- 13 This short recitation of your achievements, demonstrates how well-deserved your appointments are. The tradition of the appointment of Silk dates back, as you know, over 400 years. Whilst the name and method of appointment may have changed, the leadership role that you play has in no way diminished.
- 14 I will end this ceremony with an anecdote told by C.K. Thompson about Judge Cecil Alban White, a judge of this Court between 1920 and 1939:

“The day was hot, and there was a hint of a storm in the air. The Sheriff’s Officer slumbered peacefully in his little cubby-hole; the long row of witnesses yawned listlessly; the boys in the Press box were in the last stages of inertia - in fact all was restful. Counsel had been addressing his Honour [Judge White] for nearly two hours. It was one of those long-drawn-out District Court actions concerning the right of way over private land, and was as dull as ditchwater. Suddenly a tremendous crash of thunder rocked the Court. Counsel shied like a startled brumby and the Sheriff’s Officer nearly died with fright. ‘Ah’, remarked Judge White with a quiet smile, looking at counsel, ‘that must be a warning of some kind’. Counsel took the hint and closed his address.”<sup>1</sup>

- 15 As you have been elevated to Senior Counsel, I am confident that you will not need such divine guidance.
- 16 On behalf of all the judges of the District Court, I wish you every success in your leadership roles at the Bar. I invite you to join us for morning tea.

---

<sup>1</sup> H.T.E Holt, *A Court Rises: the Lives and Times of the Judges of the District Court of New South Wales (1859-1959)*, (1<sup>st</sup> ed 1976, Law Foundation of New South Wales) at 173.