

Admissions Ceremony (Bar) 10 September 2001

Chief Justice's observations

On behalf of the Judges, I congratulate you, ladies and gentlemen, upon your admission to the Bar.

For its size- there are currently 627 members of the Bar Association alone – the Queensland Bar is a remarkably cohesive group. I hope you will participate in corporate Bar activities: drawing on the wisdom and experience of others will enhance your own professional aptitude. If you enter into practice, you will of course need to strive to excel, for the Bar's current environment is certainly competitive. Last year, the Court admitted as many as 121 new barristers. But skill and leadership should in any case be the natural orientation of the practising barrister. The craft of the advocate in the contemporary, complicated world posits true expertise, and the development of that expertise must be your lifetime professional goal.

Nature of practice at the Bar is changing. As examples, the focus dwells much more these days on written presentation, and the prospect of the full trial appears to have been eclipsed by mediation. Accordingly, as well as basic expertise, contemporary counsel need to be flexible. Your challenge is great, but having got this far, you have a capacity to rise to it. We wish you well.

The relationship between the Court and the Bar has customarily been close, and understandably so, with barristers exercising so frequently their right of audience before the Court; and there is the additional feature that the Judges have generally been appointed from the ranks of the Bar. The Judges depend substantially on the special skill of counsel appearing before them, and upon the

fundamental reassurance that counsel will always recognise the predominance of their duty to the Court. You have already, I know, been sufficiently admonished as to the large extent of your new ethical responsibility, and as to the true rationale for your now claiming to be members of the profession – that is, service of the public.

In congratulating you, we wish additionally to acknowledge the no doubt substantial support you will have been given by your parents, partners, families and friends. I hope they remain important sources of inspiration and encouragement as you embrace your new professional commitment. Particular commendation is warranted today in the case of the honours graduates, and it is always pleasing for us to note the admission of former Judges' Associates.

We look forward, ladies and gentlemen, to your appearing in our Court, and we wish you well as you join this noble profession with such potential for beneficial public service.