



QUEENSLAND
COURTS

Admissions Ceremony

3 November 2008

1st ceremony

CHIEF JUSTICE'S OBSERVATIONS

We congratulate you on your admission to the legal profession.

You have become what we term “officers of the court”. That terminology reflects your predominant duty, to the court and the administration of the law, a duty which predominates over the duty to the client and is important to the court’s discharge of its role – the delivery of justice according to law. That designation also reflects the reality that you owe your professional legitimacy to the court: it is the court which admits you, and it is the court which will as necessary imposes sanctions for ethical dereliction. It is important that the lawyer’s dependence on the court is not these days overshadowed by the commercial demands of competitive practice. I hope that for you, it remains an enduring consideration.

You have been admitted today because you have shown the scholarship and practical persistence necessary to achieve the relevant academic qualifications and practical experience. To meet the demands to which the effective contemporary lawyer is subject, you will need to demonstrate many qualities: qualities which extend beyond up-to-date appreciation of the intricacies of the law, to embrace the more subtle wisdom to be called in aid to solve the ethical conundrums which inevitably arise. Collegial interaction will assist as you progress in the profession. So will the wise counsel of family and friends, which no doubt has already contributed substantially to your reaching this milestone today. And I hope you will display the moral depth to appreciate and demonstrate that the core of your new professionalism is service to the public – not only through the professional skills you will utilize in assisting clients, but also through participation in the host of community and pro bono thrusts currently available.

Whether you practise at the Bar or in a solicitor's office, whether you deploy your talents in the corporate world or the world of academia, you will always appreciate the intellectual rigour and moral underpinning which base this new qualification – of which you are justly proud.

We congratulate you, and your families and friends, and we wish you well as you go forward into this exciting new domain.

Admissions Ceremony

3 November 2008

2nd ceremony

On behalf of the Judges of the Supreme Court, I congratulate you on your admission to the legal profession. You join an honourable profession which discharges a publicly significant role. We trust you always recognize that public orientation, and that you are not unduly distracted by the competitive and material pressures which characterize contemporary practice.

The most commendable lawyer is driven to assist his or her fellow citizens, and that extends, with indigent clients, to working for nothing to advance a meritorious cause. We hope you maintain a real concern for those without privilege in our community, and assist not only through the direct provision of legal services, but also by involvement in community affairs and measured consideration of social concerns.

In your work, whether in court or in the solicitor's office, we expect high standards of attention to legal competence and ethical obligation. Just as the court admits you, it is to the court, as necessary, that the professional boards bring aspects of alleged dereliction. It is to the court that you owe your professional lineage. We will therefore follow your professional development with interest.

There is some cause for concern that young practitioners may quickly these days tend to forget that it is the relationship with the court which gives them that legitimacy, and which distinguishes the legal practitioner from members of other professions. The busy-ness of modern practice, an unfortunate preoccupation with so-called "billable hours", and the intensely competitive nature of the contemporary profession, can shift the focus from measured professionalism to out and out commercialism. I hope you are able to keep

your professional balance, and also a balanced lifestyle, for your work-time occupation, although important, is ultimately but one of a raft of important aspects of living.

You rightly bask today in the lustre of these new qualifications, a glow which you share with your parents and friends who will have assisted you to this point of great achievement. We sincerely hope you continue to draw on their well of wisdom and encouragement.

Congratulations and best wishes to you all.

Admissions Ceremony

3 November 2008

3rd ceremony

With my colleagues, I congratulate you, ladies and gentlemen, upon your admission to the legal profession. You will rightly be experiencing the exultation of finally having secured this important qualification, after years of sometimes arduous application to disciplined academic study – no doubt with the enthusiastic support of your families and friends. Congratulations, and although I speak of past achievement, you of course identify that as but the gateway to an avenue of lifetime professional development. We hope you continue to draw on the wise inspiration of family and friends as you progress along that avenue, as well as drawing on the experience of your professional colleagues and that of the professional associations.

The courts of law greatly value and depend upon the true professionalism of barristers and solicitors. To assure justice according to law, which is the mission of the courts, the courts must be able to rely on the high quality of those who advise in solicitors' offices, and those who present clients' cases in the courtroom. Now of course integrity is an absolute given. But so is the capacity of the advocate, for example, to support the administration of justice, when necessary, independently of the interests of the client. I mention this for emphasis, while acknowledging this is not the occasion for an ethics lecture.

It is however the occasion to remind you, as you enter the profession, of its essence: public service. Whenever you act for a client, you advance the public interest in a sense, for you make your professional expertise available to those lacking it. But public service should extend more broadly. For example, you should not expect all of your application as a lawyer to be remunerated. We hope that you will be prepared, for no financial reward, to

deploy your newly recognised qualifications in aid of those without privilege in our community – the weak, the marginalised, the friendless, those lacking means. That will be essential if you are to acquire true professionalism, as that condition is understood in this contemporary life.

You have reached an important milestone. Whatever your particular professional destination, this qualification will serve you well. The challenge, is that you ensure its deployment for the beneficial service of the community. We wish you well as you rise to that challenge, which we are now confident is certainly within your grasp.

Admissions Ceremony

3 November 2008

4th ceremony

Congratulations, ladies and gentlemen, on your accession to the legal profession. You will, perfectly reasonably, be basking in the lustre of this considerable achievement, the culmination of years of disciplined study and demanding practical legal training. Congratulations to you, and also to your families and friends – your supporters – many of whom we welcome to the Banco Court today.

Our messages to you on this occasion, while important, may be captured briefly: professional standards are very high in this State – natural inclinations assure that, but so do competitive forces, and they are strong; courts receive, and expect, ethical standards within the profession at the highest level; and true professionalism carries with it a real, not merely token, commitment to pro bono work of not insubstantial proportion. Please acknowledge those truths, and do your utmost to ensure they are reflected in the way you practise your profession.

We wish you well as you move forward in your professional lives, and repeat our sincere congratulations to you, and your supporters, upon your attaining this very significant qualification.

Admissions Ceremony

3 November 2008

5th ceremony

We endeavour by the ceremonial aspects of today's sitting, ceremony substantially rooted in the tradition of centuries, to emphasize the immutability of our joint mission – the delivery of justice according to law, and the stability of the mechanisms we employ. We also trust those ceremonial aspects render your experience the more memorable, both for you and the many members of your families and circles of friends who join you today to celebrate your substantial personal achievement. We hope your families and friends remain sources of wise guidance and inspiration throughout your professional lives.

The personal achievement we acknowledge today will equip you well for successful practice of the law, or work outside the profession – in companies, for example, or within a law school. The ethical commitment which underpins your professionalism will, we trust, always predominate, as should the public orientation of your new role: work willingly for those who lack the means to meet your ordinary fees; contribute your special talents to community organizations; interact collegially within the profession.

You join a profession of substantial proportions. It is a competitive profession, and the most effective lawyer will assume a commitment to professional development throughout his or her career.

It is also a progressive profession, which conscientiously and effectively complements the work of the courts of law.

We again congratulate you on your personal achievement, and wish you well as your careers progress.