



Welcoming Ceremony for
the Honourable Justice Graeme Crow and
the Honourable Justice Soraya Ryan
Monday 19 March 2018
Banco Court 9:15 am

**The Hon Catherine Holmes
Chief Justice**

We hold this ceremony today to welcome Justice Crow and Justice Ryan as members of the Trial Division of this court. As is so frequently the case now, both judges were sworn in in ceremonies in chambers so as to lose no time in putting them to work. I will ask that the commission appointing each as a Judge of this court be read, beginning with that for Justice Crow.

Commissions read.

On behalf of the Judges I congratulate both new judges on their appointment. In addition to the Judges sitting on the bench, Justice North and Justice Henry join us by video link from Townsville and Mackay respectively. The third regional judge, Justice McMeekin, whose place as central judge Justice Crow will take, is with us in person. Justice Mullins is in Perth, but has asked to be associated with these remarks. The ceremony is also being streamed to Rockhampton, Justice Crow's home town, and to Cairns.

We are delighted to be joined in congratulating Justices Crow and Ryan by Justice Keane of the High Court, the Chief Judge and judges of the District Court, including Judge Burnett, whom you, Justice Crow, will see a good deal of in Rockhampton - I should mention that Judge Horneman-Wren, who has known you since your school days, very much regrets that he cannot be here;

Justice Dowsett and other judges of the Federal Court – I note their attendance with appreciation; judges of the Family Court and of the Federal Circuit Court; the Chief Magistrate and Magistrates; the President of the Land Court and member Stilgoe. Many of the retired judges of this court are present and there is one I must mention particularly. Former Justice Glen Williams is here; you were his associate, Justice Ryan, and I suspect there is a surreal aspect for him in seeing you now on the bench.

At the bar table I acknowledge Mr Dunning, the Solicitor-General, who will speak on behalf of the Attorney-General, Ms Treston, Vice-President of the Bar Association, and Mr Taylor, President of the Law Society.

And there is a particular welcome for the family and friends of our new judges. Justice Crow, you have present your wife, Vicki, your three sons, Tom, Oliver and James and your daughter Isabella, your parents, your parents-in-law, your three brothers, and your sister-in-law, your nieces and a number of friends. Justice Ryan, we have with us today your husband Tim, who is well known to all of us on the bench, your daughters, Lydia and Sabrina, your son Leo, your mother, Mrs Hazel Irving and your two brothers. And two old friends, Justice Sarah Derrington and Ms Johnson.

We welcome to the ceremony all of you here, departmental officers including the Director-General, Mr Mackie; members of the profession; members of the academy; and, of course, members of the public.

Justice Crow, you're an honours graduate in Law and Commerce from the University of Queensland. Both you and Justice Ryan were admitted as barristers in 1991, so there's 54 years of barristerial experience we're welcoming to this bench. And can I say, it's a very happy mix of experience between civil and commercial in your case, Justice Crow, and criminal and administrative in yours, Justice Ryan.

Justice Crow, you, like Justice Ryan were an associate, in your case to Judge Dodds of the District Court. But two thirds of the way through the year, the chance came up for you to go into chambers with former Justice Stan Jones, who I'm delighted to say joins us today. Judge Dodds encouraged you to seize the opportunity and you never looked back.

You stayed at the Bar in Rockhampton and in 2010 were the first barrister born and bred in Rockhampton and practising there to take silk. So it's entirely appropriate that in April you will replace Justice McMeekin as the Central Judge.

You'll be the 13th Central Judge. I checked, anxiously, whether you were superstitious; your response was that your only superstition was never backing a horse you owned because they always lost. Which actually sounds more reality-based to me.

Justice Crow, I'm well aware from my own visits to Rockhampton of your leadership of the legal community there, professionally and socially, and I know that both the legal and lay communities of Central Queensland are delighted with your appointment. And although Justice McMeekin will be a hard act to follow, he is confident that you will do a splendid job as his successor and I am confident that he is right. After all, as retired Justice Alan Demack pointed out to me last week, you will have the unprecedented advantage of not one but two retired Central Judges on hand to point out where you're going wrong.

Justice Ryan, you graduated from the University of Queensland with first class Honours in Law, and like Justice Crow are also a Commerce graduate. You won prizes in Mining Law, Criminal Law and Evidence. In all the years I've known you I have never noticed any glimmer of interest in Mining Law,

but the other two make sense. After your time as an associate with Justice Williams, and I note that you saw the whole year out, you were admitted as a solicitor in 1990. You spent a brief period with a large firm before letting your heart prevail over financial common sense, getting admitted as a barrister and starting practice in crime. You began work with the Director of Prosecutions.

My first recollection of you is from the very early 90's, as an uncommonly reasonable bail clerk. Which means you managed the bail applications for the Crown in the Supreme Court. You were strikingly intelligent, prodigiously hard-working, meticulously well-prepared and a delight to deal with. So nothing's changed there.

Not surprisingly, you rose through the ranks at the DPP to become a Senior Crown Prosecutor. You moved to the Legal Aid Office as counsel in 2003 and then to the private Bar in 2010. With your characteristic modesty, you left it a bit long before you applied for silk, but you received your commission as Queen's Counsel in 2013.

You have contributed to the legal profession in too many ways to detail here, but I will mention that you have been a part-time member of the Queensland Law Reform Commission where Justice Atkinson as President found your assistance invaluable; you are an author of Carter's Criminal Code; and you are a member of the Bar Practice Course Management Committee. I hope you'll find time to continue with the last two roles. With the last Brisbane appointment, Justice Davis, and your own appointment, this Court now has a remarkable depth of criminal law experience, which at a time of a rapidly increasing criminal workload is very much welcomed.

Justice Crow and Justice Ryan, your new colleagues are delighted to welcome you to this Bench, and to welcome Vicki, Tim and your respective children to the court community.