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IN THE DISTRICT COURT  
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE CHIEF JUDGE  
5 THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE PRICE A O  
AND THE JUDGES OF THE COURT

MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021

10 **SWEARING IN OF HIS HONOUR JUDGE ANDREW COLEMAN SC AS A  
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Honourable M Speakman SC MP, Attorney General, on behalf of the  
New South Wales Bar  
15 Mr L Babb SC, Director Public Prosecutions  
Ms J Warner, President, Law Society of New South Wales, on behalf of  
solicitors  
Mr P Khandhar SC, Junior Vice President, New South Wales Bar Association

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(Commission read)

(Oaths of office taken)

25 PRICE CJ: Judge Coleman, on behalf of all the judges of the District Court of  
New South Wales I congratulate you. I very warmly welcome you on behalf of  
all the judges and wish you all the very best in your judicial career.

COLEMAN J: Thank you, Chief Judge.

30 PRICE J: Mr Attorney.

ATTORNEY GENERAL: May it please the Court. May I begin by  
acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather, the  
Gadigal of the Eora Nation. I pay my respects to elders past, present and  
emerging.

35 Judge Coleman, on behalf of the bar and our State it is my great pleasure  
to congratulate you on your appointment as judge of the District Court of  
New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pass on my congratulations to the  
members of your family who are here today, your wife Cathleen, and your

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three children, Madeleine, Sophie and Darcy. Your mother Patricia, sister Debbie and brothers Paul and Matthew.

One of your Honour's great loves is Bondi, where you grew up and still live. There you lived with your three brothers, Mark, Paul and Matthew, sister  
5 Debbie, grandmother, parents and many household pets. From your earliest days you were a little different from your siblings and known to be more serious and conscientious.

Your parents Patricia and Barry had met as airline stewards for Qantas. Your father continued to work for Qantas, which meant he was often away.  
10 Summers were spent walking across the road to the beach early in the morning, and coming home from the beach there were seldom just the five children there for dinner. You, your siblings and your parents brought along friends and everyone enjoyed being together with many household pets.

One of these pets was your galah which you curiously named Gertie. A  
15 fine name except it was the same name as your resident grandmother. Calling the bird would inevitably mean your grandmother responded "yes". This appealed to your Pythonesque sense of humour.

Monty Python has been a great love of yours. Your Honour's colleagues have spoken of your great love of institutions; of family, to the law, to rugby  
20 league, to friendship, and yet simultaneously you hold a love for a comedy outfit that sets out to demolish the edifice of British social culture and institutions on which so many of ours are based.

Your Honour attended Marcellin College, Randwick. You wanted to be a pilot but poor eyesight and your father steering you towards a different  
25 direction brought you to studying the law. Sadly your father, Barry, died in

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1994.

While in third year law at the University of New South Wales you met your wife, Cathleen, in the romantic subject of Property and Equity. This was the late 1980s. Your courtship involved a first date at the Royal Easter Show, watching the wood chopping and seeing Hunters and Collectors at Selina's Coogee Bay Hotel.

For a time Cathleen stole you away from Bondi to live in Mosman Bay. You felt this to be so far from your beloved Bondi that you gave friends who visited \$2 for the harbour bridge toll and wished them a safe return.

On many Friday nights you held Pizza Hut to account for its promise to deliver within 30 minutes or provide the pizza free. Sadly, your Honour was then banned from that institution. They did not for some time take kindly to being held to account for their rules.

Ruthless discount scruples aside, you are well known for your great kindness. You showed great compassion to Cathleen's sister Karen who sadly passed away. Karen was intellectually disabled after contracting measles as a three year old. Your Honour spent a lot of time with her, her family and her friends.

Aside from your family, friends and Bondi, another great love is rugby league and your beloved Roosters. Going to watch Friday night home games is a Coleman family institution in itself. Your Honour was a rugby league referee who showed great promise to referee for first grade. You showed a great penchant for using a loud whistle and ensuring adherence to the rules, and whilst I am sure adherence to the rules will serve you well on the bench, I trust that the whistle will be left behind.

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Despite your promise as a referee, you started working for Clayton Utz and chose to focus on the law. Since those early days at Clayton Utz you have worked on any many notable cases. You were admitted as a barrister in 1996 and appointed as senior counsel in 2010. Your Honour has a particular  
5 expertise in insolvency, commercial law, insurance, inquiries, common law and sports law.

You made a dramatic entrance into the field of sports law. Your first case, which as a Rosters fan was both a professionally and personally rewarding experience, resulted successfully in kicking out South Sydney from  
10 the competition in 1999. It also resulted in your Honour and colleagues being chased out of the courtroom by devastated fans.

One of your early cases was as junior counsel in the Graham Barclay oysters case, a class action by group members who contracted hepatitis A from eating oysters harvested from Wallace Lake. Your Honour appeared in a  
15 number of inquests, including representing the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust, and the inquest into the death of cricketer, Phillip Hughes.

As junior counsel for the applicants in Wingecarribee Shire Council v Lehman Brothers you successfully appeared before the full Court of the Federal Court in having a deed of company arrangement set aside. The  
20 decision was successfully defended in the High Court.

You were one of the senior counsel acting for a number of local councils in an action against council's investment advisor ABN AMBRO Bank v Standard and Poor's Rating Agency, arising out of the council's investment in collateralised debt obligations. This case, heard in the Federal Court and on  
25 appeal to the full Feral Court, was the first time that a ratings agency had been

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held liable for the rating of a financial instrument.

You were appointed by the Rugby League Players Association as senior counsel for players from the Cronulla Sharks to act for and provide advice to them in respect of the ongoing investigation by ASADA into drugs in rugby  
5 league in 2013.

For much of 2019 and early 2020, your Honour appeared for the then Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police in the Royal Commission into the management of police informants in Victoria, known as the Gobbo Royal Commission.

10 Your Honour's dedicated time to considerable pro bono work and service to sport and your community. In 2017 you were appointed to the National Basketball League Tribunal. In 2019 you acted pro bono for an up and coming player in the New South Wales Rugby League Anti-Doping Tribunal.

As senior part-time member of the NCAT Appeal Panel and in the  
15 Occupational and Consumer and Commercial Division, your Honour was known for being reliable, professional, collegiate, and giving well-written comprehensive written reasons in a timely manner.

You were known for giving colleagues sensible, considered opinions that were often courageous. You have found time to be on the North Bondi RSL  
20 Appeal Panel and secretary of the North Bondi RSL sub-branch, where you were committed to ensuring veterans and serving ADF members are assisted in welfare and social matters. You are a Major in Australian Army Legal Corps and chair of the National Rugby League Player Agent Accreditation Board.

Your ability to work efficiently, to get to the essence of a dispute and to  
25 solve it, have enabled you more than most to have a healthy work-life balance.

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You place great importance on friendship and have a longstanding loyal group of old friends you travel on fishing trips with, including to Arnhem Land, North Western Western Australia and Cape York, and you have t-shirts printed for each trip. Your Honour loves spending time with your children and Cathleen  
5 and heading down the coast to fish and walk along the beach with your new chocolate Labrador, Winnie.

You will be deeply missed by your colleagues at Banco Chambers and at NCAT. You have been described as someone whose words are matched by actions. At Banco Chambers you would drive to work, park in the Domain,  
10 walk through the underground tunnel to Macquarie Street and then onto Martin Place. On that walk there were two different homeless people, one in the St James Tunnel who played the guitar and another at Martin Place.

On occasions when you gave a colleague a lift home they saw you had befriended these two men and sought them out to give them money and food.  
15 The homeless person above ground had severe mental health issues. You helped him to go to a shelter, to get medical care and to coordinate with services to ensure that he had help.

This took place over a period of years. Your colleagues observed that it was not something you spoke of, it was just something you did. They wouldn't  
20 have known about it if you hadn't given those lifts home.

A consistent theme in the anecdotes told by family and friends was your real interest in people and understanding of people from all walks of life. Now for something completely different.

Many stories are told of your Honour's adherence to rules and respect for  
25 institutions, but I am told that nothing makes you crankier than rules for rules

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sake. John Cleese said of Monty Python, “people said we were anti-authoritarian, I think the truth is we were anti-bad-authority. I mean you have to have authority. You can’t just dispense with traffic lights”.

Now, as Judge Coleman, you bring your authority to listen, to administer  
5 justice, not in a way that is arbitrary or capricious, but in a way that’s genuine, delivered by a person who believes in rules. Your sensible balance, reason and sense of humanity bring you here today to do just that and be sworn in as Judge Coleman.

Congratulations on your appointment and best wishes for your career on  
10 the bench. May it please the Court.

WARNER: I acknowledge the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which this Court stands, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge any Indigenous Australians present today or watching the  
15 streaming of this ceremony.

I come before the Court on behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales to offer congratulations and wish your Honour well in your appointment to the District Court of New South Wales. Mindful of the very important role family has played in your Honour’s life, I would like to acknowledge your mother Pat,  
20 your wife Cathleen, herself a brilliant family lawyer and partner at Pearson Emerson, children Sophie, Darcy and Madeline - Sophie I gather as a law student is on track to join the family business - and the many extended family and friends joining us in person or streaming today.

Your mum Pat, I am reliably informed, was your secret weapon at the  
25 University of New South Wales. She worked at the law faculty while your

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Honour was an undergrad leaving your fellow students to note that your Honour's timetable seemed, how shall I say this, particularly well-suited to your lifestyle. Not too many early classes, because you're not a morning person, but not too many late classes either because of an evening your Honour and  
5 friends would race across to East Leagues Club and after a quick change and meal work, until the small hours of the morning.

Your Honour's journey into law began well before these halcyon days however. As a school student I understand your Honour shone in a production of Agatha Christie's Witness for the Prosecution and after a shoulder injury cut  
10 your playing career short, your Honour served as a rugby league referee; as good a preparation for the bench as I can think of. Even then, your Honour developed a reputation for impartiality. More than one schoolmate still recalls your Honour blowing the whistle against them; friendship notwithstanding.

In July 1987, your Honour was admitted to the role of solicitor, and not  
15 long afterwards your Honour began the first of two stints at Freehill Hollingdale & Page as it was then known, separated by time spent practicing in the United Kingdom. We have some of your fans from Freehills present today.

In your time at Freehills, we, and Graham Johnson and Damien Lovell and you, all shared a mentor in the late, great Howard Keith Chillingworth  
20 Steele, or HKCS for short, or Hacks for even shorter. HKCS had the odd kick in his gallop. He liked to refer to people as "fellows" or "chaps" or in my case "old girl". He was a giant in our litigation practice and he knew a good lawyer when he saw one, and he thought you were a very good lawyer. He thought really highly of you and he described you as being not being just an excellent  
25 lawyer, but a splendid chap. I and your friends from Freehills concur,



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and I'm sure that if Keith was in the room today he would be booming "well done old boy".

In 1996 your Honour was called to the bar and over the intervening decades developed a well-deserved reputation for expertise in commercial insurance and sports law, as well as insolvency. For many solicitors, both before and after you took silk, your Honour was barrister of choice. Easy to brief, and that is very important. Devastatingly effective in the courtroom, also very important. Profoundly empathetic to your clients; probably most important.

In the words of one solicitor "he is a person of magnificent humour and wit who is universally liked by colleagues and loved by his friends and family. He really is one of the best people that could have been appointed".

Your empathy has been apparently likened to a superpower. Your colleagues are amazed at not only your understanding of the law but your ability to walk in the shoes of your clients, to see what they see and feel what they feel.

In one case that I was told about your Honour represented a young athlete in a doping matter. Over time a view was formed that the athlete hadn't intentionally taken the banned substance but that an adverse finding was likely. The sportsman in you knew how devastating that would be for his career, so your Honour gave him advice and not just the legal kind.

You didn't sugar-coat the likely outcome but you told him to keep training, to continue to look after his physical and emotional wellbeing and to come back stronger. You told him that this didn't have to be the end of his playing career but just another obstacle to overcome.

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The practice of law has taken your Honour all around the world and into the heart of some of the most complicated and high profile cases in Australia. To paraphrase one of your colleagues, it is your ability to consume massive amounts of detail while not losing sight of the heart of the legal matter that  
5 allows your Honour to be so proficient in complex commercial cases.

I am told that not too long ago the law also took your Honour to Fiji. The case was a complicated one with many disputed facts and dealing with local estate law.

Your colleague and briefing solicitor remember this case for three dispute  
10 reasons; (1) it took place in 2016, which is apparently the year the Sharks won the premiership, (2) your Honour's cross-examination was a text book case study in getting into the heart of a legal matter, (3) the accommodation, which was pretty special. Your Honour's only requirement for your room was that it was big enough for everyone to work in and you ended up in the royal suite;  
15 very fitting. The name wasn't a misnomer. Two days before your booking ended your Honour was booted out for the King of Tonga no less.

It is perhaps ironic that for a man who nearly shared a room with royalty your Honour is remembered at Banco Chambers as the kindest and most generous of egalitarians. Your Honour is much missed in the chambers you  
20 helped to established. The universal consensus is that a good bloke has left the floor. Also, no-one has yet taken up your mantel of singing Elton John covers while they work which is probably a good thing.

But while your colleagues miss you as a peer, mentor and friend, they are also incredibly proud as are your family and wide circle of friends. Your  
25 Honour will bring a wealth of knowledge, personal integrity and insight to the

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District Court of New South Wales. The people of our State are privileged to be served by you in this role and solicitors have every confidence that you will make an excellent judicial officer.

On behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales congratulations, your  
5 Honour, and “well done, old boy”.

COLEMAN DCJ: Chief Judge, your Honours and ladies and gentlemen, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

10 Thank you Mr Attorney and Ms Warner for those very overly-generous words. Your research was certainly thorough, although your sources may have embellished some of the more favourable matters you mentioned. I greatly appreciate the time that each of you have taken to come and speak today.

15 It has been pointed out to me that I am being sworn in on the Ides of March, a day that apparently portends no good. But why? We all know the case of a soothsayer warning Julius Caesar to beware the Ides of March, and we know how that ended, but what else? I’ve looked into this.

Other apparently significant events which occurred on this day included  
20 the abdication of Tzar Nicholas II in 1917, objectively may I suggest not a bad thing, the world premiere of The Godfather, certainly a good thing, and perhaps most alarming to some the cancelling of the Ed Sullivan Show by CBS in 1971. Undoubtedly the Caesar murder was horrible but that crime would attract the jurisdiction of a Court up the road, and whilst not downplaying the  
25 importance of other events on this day I am confident I will be able to refuse

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offers I supposedly can't, I shan't in the future be crying "Et tu, Chief Judge", and this is a booking for which it is very hard to be cancelled. Accordingly, I feel a little bit more confident that my judicial career will not be ruined only by the date on which it began.

5           Today of course marks a momentous day in my career. It's not often that one can say that your childhood dream of doing what you wanted to do when you grow up is fulfilled. Well, however, as the Attorney noted, for as long as I can remember I always wanted to be a pilot. Yet here I am today being sworn in as a judge. How did this happen?

10           My path to the law was certainly not a family thing. The only known family connection with the law goes back to two of our great, great, great grandfathers; they were both, however, on the wrong side of the judicial fence as it were.

          One, William Deane, known as "Lumpy" due to his significant girth, was  
15 convicted of stealing a £20 bank note from his employer. He was originally sentenced to death but this was commuted and he left for Australia having spent three years in prison, arriving in Sydney Cove on the Hillsborough in 1799. Lumpy managed to obtain a ticket of leave soon after arriving in the colony, and eventually became a very successful businessman in the area  
20 now known as Rooty Hill.

          His time in the colonies was not, regrettably, free from interaction with the law. His son, John, was charged in 1836 for stealing cattle from no less than the wealthy landowner and barrister, W C Wentworth. Grandpa Lumpy was charged with receiving the stolen cows. They were tried together before the  
25 then Chief Justice Dowling; see [1836] NSWSC 34.

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John was convicted quickly by the jury. Lumpy was, however, acquitted to the recorded applause of the Court observers. Alarming though, he did not impress the Chief Justice, who, in his remarks on sentence, expressed pity for John who the Chief Justice said, “had not received the benefit and good  
5 example or had the advantage of wise counsel of a good and virtuous father”. John was transported from the colonies for life and Lumpy was discharged.

The other great, great, great grandfather was a proud Irish shepherd called Samuel Sloane. He was sentenced to seven years transportation for sedition and arrived in the colonies in 1825. Samuel made a better fist of  
10 things, at least as far as we know, and was a shepherd on one of the early expeditions taking sheep over the Blue Mountains.

So it wasn't seeking family redemption for the experience of my ancestors with the law that drew me to study law, nor was it the fact that my late Godfather, Phil Tonkin, was a solicitor from the 60s in the then developing  
15 town of Woy Woy on the Central Coast. His legacy lives on with Tonkin Drysdale still a successful firm in the now bustling town of Woy Woy, with his son and grandson working there.

I think my ending up in the law was the result of a few things. To be a pilot you either joined the Air Force or needed money to get in private lessons  
20 where after you could take your chances on getting the required hours and a job with an airline. But first, I was told, you needed proficiency in physics and, for reasons which still escape me for the skills involved in flying, a good score in chemistry. I had at that time no desire to sign up for the Air Force when there was no guarantee of becoming a flying officer. I rated my chances in  
25 that regard very much less than average, noting my HSC scores of 57 and 53

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respectively for those pesky science subjects.

We didn't have the money to send me to pilot school, so what else to do? Humanities I was told were my strength, so when it came down to filling out the university admission forms in 1981, and with absolutely no idea about what I  
5 wanted to do, I put down arts/law. Despite the aforementioned science scores hanging around my HSC glory like an anchor, I scraped into arts/law at UNSW by two marks and the rest as they say is history.

There was also an advantage of studying law at New South Wales which has been mentioned by Ms Warner. My mum, Pat, who is here today at  
10 92 years young, ran the general office at the law school. I do wish to set the record straight however and state that my continuously allegedly favourable timetables and ease of access to course materials was, contrary to popular belief and scandalous gossip, purely coincidental.

As has been mentioned, I commenced work as a solicitor at Clayton Utz  
15 in 1987 and then Freehill Hollingdale & Page briefly before experiencing two fabulous years in London at Linklaters & Paines. It was a wonderful experience. Unlike what I had been used to here however, solicitors then rarely appeared in the High Court of England and Wales as advocates, even for directions hearings.

20 I can recall vividly my first appearance in the Commercial Court at the Queen's Bench Division. For directions hearings, you took a seat where you could find one and stood announced your appearance from where you were seated. When my turn came I confidently rose to my feet. This had to be easy I thought, after all I had mastered, in so far as one could, appearing before the  
25 most terrifying judicial officer in New South Wales, the then Registrar in Equity

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at our Supreme Court, Registrar Leslie.

“May it please your Lordship” I said in what I thought was a proper manner with excellent pronunciation. Clearly, however, my accent is thicker to those not used to it than I had thought. You would have thought Paul Hogan  
5 himself had just asked his Lordship to throw another shrimp on the barbie. Every pair of eyes in the Court, including those of his Lordship, looked at me. There was deadly silence. Bravely I fought on and his Lordship graciously made the consent orders.

On return from England I was fortunate to be re-employed at Freehills. It  
10 was a wonderful place to work as Ms Warner has mentioned. I made many friends and I do particularly want to mention the assistance given to me by the late Keith Steele, the partner for whom I worked. He was an incredibly supportive man and mentor, especially during one year in which we had numerous family deaths and other personal stressors. I was terribly upset  
15 when he passed away a few years ago.

Having taken the plunge into law, and not deterred by the horrors of being accent shamed in London, I always had an inkling I would end up at the bar. Timing, however, is not my greatest strength, and in 1996 with a young toddler and a fresh mortgage I took the leap and was called to the bar.

20 I was very fortunate to obtain the readers room on 11 St James’ Hall Chambers. It was an incredibly strong floor. Many of the members who were there have gone on to take judicial appointments. They include Justice Peter McClellan, Chief Justice Helen Murrell, first as a judge of this Court and then to her current role as Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of the  
25 ACT, Justice Nigel Rein, first as a judge of this Court and now a justice of the

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Supreme Court, Justice David Hammerschlag, Justice Jayne Jagot and Justice Robert Beech-Jones.

Justice Beech-Jones was my next-door neighbour in Chambers. His Honour's penchant for "borrowing" post-it notes and even batteries from my dictaphone have been noted elsewhere. He was also the root cause of the crafting of Coleman's Rules for Borrowing Law Reports; they were very strict rules. Having regard to our now respective positions in the judicial pecking order, I hope this does not remain a sore point with his Honour.

I worked with many excellent silks in my time at the bar. I shall not name them for fear of forgetting one. I thank them all for their guidance in practice at the bar, particularly in the critical aspects of showing courtesy and respect to your opponents.

I want to thank my tutors, David Robinson SC, he himself now an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court of the ACT, and Bruce McClintock SC.

Robinson was on the same floor so we saw and worked with each other regularly. He was a source of much work and wisdom. As for McClintock, not being so geographically convenient - there was that chasm called Phillip Street - we did manage to speak the day he took silk during my reading year where he promptly advised me "you'd better get another tutor". I have greatly valued the advice and support given by each of them over the years.

Things were great at St James' Hall. My room was large by Sydney standards and practice was good, however in late 2004, seduced by the prospect of a bigger room and perhaps the bigger egos of the founding members, I was lured away by Robert Newlinds to be a founding member of Banco Chambers.



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I say “bigger rooms” for those who visited Banco when we were in the reserve bank will know what I mean. I’m sure one of our rooms would have been big enough to accommodate the entire staff of the Reserve Bank foreign currency department.

5 Banco was and continues to be a great success, and I’m proud to have been involved in its development and growth. Banco last year moved into newly built premises at 60 Martin Place. The rooms there are frankly palaces with harbour views. When I saw my judges’ chambers in this building I was sure there’d been some sort of mistake. The Masonic Centre, while allegedly  
10 architecturally interesting, is no Sydney Harbour.

I shall very much miss all of my colleagues at Banco. I would particularly like to thank Robert Newlinds SC for your friendship over 26 years. A fierce cross-examiner and a fiercer mate I have valued our conversations on life at the bar and life generally.

15 I would also like to mention Peter Silver. It didn’t start off well, when Peter, as my next-door neighbour, came into my room in the first few weeks of Banco to ask me to turn my music down but we’ve become lifelong friends after that. Peter, I shall very much miss our daily laughs. You have the wisdom and peace that only comes from a life as interesting and well lived as  
20 yours.

I wish to thank all of my juniors, who put up with me in the 10 years since I took silk. Your skills have made me look better than I am. Any failings in presentation or results are mine and not yours. I also thank the solicitors who have had the patience and bravery to brief me over the years. Thanks to my  
25 clerk Jeh Coutinho. Jeh has been a tireless support and I have really valued

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his confidence and advice.

It has been mentioned that I have been a member of NCAT since 2014. It has been a privilege to serve on the Tribunal and I want to acknowledge the work that its members do every day in dealing with the thousands of matters  
5 which would otherwise swamp the justice system in New South Wales. I greatly admire their contribution to the administration of justice in this State.

The work of the first president, Justice Wright, and that of the current president, Justice Armstrong, should be acknowledged. I thank your Honours for the chance to make, I hope, a small contribution to the work of the Tribunal.

10 I have also been a member of the Australian Army Legal Corps in the Army Reserves since 2017 and I am pleased to see some green in the room today. My only regrets with my army service is that I did not do it earlier and I have not had enough time to give more to the Corps. There are extraordinary people who serve in our defence service including extraordinary lawyers in the  
15 Corps. The importance of their advice and support to Command and ADF members should not be underestimated.

I would particularly like to thank Colonel Bruce Levet for getting me into the Corps and his Honour Colonel Doug Humphreys OAM for his leadership and advice as army panel leader.

20 Of course, none of which I have done would have been possible without the love and support of my family. I have already mentioned that my mum, Pat, is here today. A tower of a woman who has cared for us all as selflessly as ever a mum had. Pat ran our house whilst, as was mentioned, dad was away for a large part of the year with Qantas. To make ends meet she worked  
25 jobs at night until she landed the job at UNSW where she worked for many

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years. Many UNSW law graduates will remember Pat from the general office.

I am so pleased she is here so I can publically thank her.

Dad and my brother Mark left us way too young and I'm sure both would have enjoyed the ceremony today. I miss them terribly. So too my late  
5 mother-in-law, Marie Clements, I am pleased that her husband, Bill, can be here today.

I am very happy that my sister Debbie and her husband Paul and my brother Paul are here today. My other brother Matt is unwell, and I hope you get well soon, mate. I am grateful for their love over the years, even though I  
10 was the worst surfer of the bunch. We grew up in a two bedroom one bathroom semi in the very unfashionable suburb of Bondi with mum, dad, Grandma Gertie, the five kids, the inevitable dogs and the occasional galah as has been mentioned. We were all close; proverbially and literally.

I am also pleased to see my in-laws, Sue and Ian Spiers who have been  
15 family for 32 years here today, and I'm sorry my brother-in-law Paul Jackson can't be here.

My eldest daughter, Maddy, is in Melbourne and unable to travel here today for fear of a lockdown which would risk her final year of study in medicine. She is apparently watching the live stream so hi Maddy, wish you  
20 were here and I'm very proud of you, you will be a great doctor.

Likewise I am also proud of my children, Sophie, who is soon to be a lawyer and Darcy, who is studying engineering and commerce in Canberra who are both here. I am constantly amazed at our children's achievements and look forward to watching you move through life as fine adults on your own  
25 paths. I love you all and am grateful for your unquestioning love and support.

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For 32 years the rock in our family has been my wife, Cathleen. She is certainly the best lawyer in the family and the best human I know. She knows how much she means to me and how I appreciate her unending sacrifices so that I could follow, and am following, my career path. It is a testament to her  
5 ability as a lawyer that even out of 12 years out of practice to look after the kids there was a queue to hire her in a chosen speciality of family law. I look forward to many more adventures together, Cath, and I know you will knock any judicial stuffiness out of me should it creep in.

So, whilst I have not fulfilled my childhood dream of flying aircraft, I am in  
10 a way about to embark on a new part of my career which will involve some piloting. I will be in command of my own Court. I am proud that this is so. I think that service as a judge is the pinnacle of one's legal career.

Like all new pilots, I shall try and follow the charts and steer a steady heading and avoid too much turbulence. I hope the air traffic controllers in the  
15 control towers of the appeal courts will not feel the need to point out too many errors in my navigation, altitude or speed.

For those who appear before me I say this; please place and keep your seats in the upright position. Ensure any mobile phones and electronic devices are switched off and placed on Court mode. Please fasten your  
20 seatbelts and keep them fastened until Court is adjourned as this pilot is now cleared for judicial take-off. I thank you all very much for coming today.