

MR D. O'BRIEN: May it please the Court. It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of the barristers of Queensland today at the swearing-in ceremony for your Honour Justice Crowley. I extend a particular welcome to your immediate and extended family who have joined us here today. They have every reason to be particularly proud of your Honour's achievements and your Honour's elevation to this Court. I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging. I note that many First Nation's People are here in attendance today to celebrate this occasion.

Your Honour joins this Court after almost 20 years at the Bar where you achieved your ambition of becoming a Specialist Criminal Law Advocate. Your Honour's legal career has been rich with variety and challenges from starting as a Solicitor in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, working in the New South Wales Crown Solicitor's Office as a Senior Solicitor, becoming an in-house Crown Prosecutor at the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, a Principal Crown Prosecutor in the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and then, at the end of 2007, returning to Sydney in the New South Wales Office of Director of Public Prosecutions where you worked as private counsel retained by that office. In that role, you prosecuted matters throughout Australia and were briefed in several special leave applications at Full Court appeals in the High Court.

You remained with the New South Wales Office of Director of Public Prosecutions until you returned to Queensland and joined a private Bar in 2009, and since then, you have been routinely involved in serious and complex criminal law matters, often involving novel issues and points of statute interpretation. This experience has seen your Honour recognised in Queensland and throughout Australia as a leader of the criminal Bar with an intimate knowledge of State and Federal laws and exceptionally high standard of [indistinct] in recognition of those qualities, you were appointed Queen's Counsel in 2018, becoming Queensland's first First Nation's Barrister to take silk.

Unsurprisingly, your Honour's elevation has been universally applauded, not just in Queensland, but throughout Australia. Indeed, on the day your appointment was announced, I was in Melbourne, meeting with a number of Victorian Supreme Court and County Court Judges. They all spoke in glowing terms of your Honour's exceptional ability as an advocate when you had appeared before them. Your Honour's juniors also speak of your Honour's ability to focus on the critical issues in a case and to remain calm, measured and unwaveringly polite, even in the most trying of circumstances. Such characteristics will serve your Honour well on your time on this Bench.

Your Honour's taste in music, perhaps, not so much. Some of your Honour's juniors have raised concerns about your Honour's selection of music played in chambers while working up a brief together. No doubt that will be a matter for some negotiations amongst your fellow Judges now that your Honour has taken up chambers in this building. Outside of practice, you have been a valuable contributor to the association as Chair of the Indigenous Barristers Committee and a member of

the Professional Conduct Committee. You have generously given your time to junior members of the Bar and have shared your knowledge and experience with them. You've also been a senior instructor with the Australian Advocacy Institute, a Director and member of the Ngalaya Indigenous Lawyers Association, the Australia  
5 Lawyers for Human Rights and the Australian Law Reform. I'm sure each of those associations would echo the comments made in the ceremony today.

Justice Crowley, today is of historical significance for this Court, for this State, and for this country. As much as we have a right to be proud of the Queensland and  
10 Australian legal system, it is the case that for too long, judicial decisions affecting the lives of First Nation's People have been made without their voice being represented as part of that system. The judiciary, but especially Superior Courts should reflect who we are as a country and as a community. A mirror to who we are as a people. Despite the First Nation's People being the custodians of this land and a  
15 critical part of the history and make up of this country, our judiciary has never reflected that fact. Your Honour's elevation becoming first First Nation's Superior Court Judge in this land is an important step in a much longer process to ensure that this historical wrong is rectified. I can tell your Honour, the barristers of Queensland are extremely proud that you are one of our own. The Bar Association of  
20 Queensland congratulates you on your appointment to this Court, assures your Honour of the ongoing support of its members. Again, I extend the Association's congratulations to you and your family on this accomplishment and we wish you all the best for your future on this Court. May it please the Court.

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