



**ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT, DAMIEN O'BRIEN KC, ON THE OCCASION OF A  
WELCOME CEREMONY FOR MAGISTRATE AMANDA BAIN AND MAGISTRATE  
MEGAN FAIRWEATHER ON THURSDAY, 30 MAY 2024**

1. May it please the court.
2. It is a pleasure to speak on behalf of the Bar Association of Queensland and its members at the occasion of this ceremony to formally welcome you, Magistrate Bain and Magistrate Fairweather, as members of the Court, particularly in its coronial jurisdiction.
3. I would also like to welcome your immediate and extended families to this ceremony. They have every reason to be particularly proud today of all that your Honours have achieved and of this appointment to this Court.
4. **MAGISTRATE BAIN**, public service is familiar to your Honour, having spent nearly all of the last two decades as a barrister employed by either the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions or Crown Law.
5. In the first part of your career, with the DPP, you were a Crown Prosecutor. In that role you regularly conducted jury trials on a range of offences including property, violence and sexual offences, as well as committal hearings in the Magistrates, District and Supreme Courts throughout the state. You also undertook a great deal of circuit work prosecuting in the regions including Dalby, Charleville, Roma and Warwick. You also spent a year working in the Toowoomba office of the DPP.
6. In 2011, your Honour joined the advocacy team at Crown Law, where you were, until recently, Assistant Crown Solicitor responsible for prosecution and other advocacy. At Crown Law, your practice expanded to include the prosecution of criminal offences on behalf of government agencies at first instance in the Magistrates Court and on appeal in the District Court for offences such as fraud under the *Worker's Compensation and Rehabilitation Act*, contraventions of the *Food Act* and housing regulation under the *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act*.

7. At Crown Law, you were responsible for the most complex and urgent prosecutions for the State, including the transfer of now-adult detainees under the *Youth Justice Act*, applications for the protection of children before the establishment of the Office of the Director of Child Protection Litigation, reviews and appeals in QCAT and the AAT, and, most relevantly, coronial inquests on behalf of Queensland Corrective Services and the Department of Energy and Public Works.
8. Your Honour employed that wealth of experience in your time at the private Bar; however it was only a few short months until you answered the call to public service once more. The people of Queensland will be glad to benefit from that experience, instead.
9. **MAGISTRATE FAIRWEATHER**, over the last two decades in your career as a solicitor you have demonstrated a commitment to the many aspects of the law which interact with public health, including medical negligence, administrative law and human rights. Most recently, that commitment was shown at Queensland Health, where you were Chief Legal Counsel from 2021.
10. Your time at Queensland Health cannot be described as ‘uneventful’. When you joined the department, the COVID-19 pandemic was far from over, and you led the legal branch, which was still involved in a number of human rights challenges, through that disruptive period. You also led the Department’s legal consideration of the issues which arose from DNA testing, and its responses to the commissions of inquiry which followed, the integration of Norfolk Island state services, and provided advice to the Director-General and Minister for Health on urgent and high risk matters.
11. Prior to joining Queensland Health, your Honour was special counsel at Minter Ellison for many years, where you acted on behalf of public and private health services, individuals and patients. In that time, you were involved in multiple coronial inquests, managed and investigated complaints of corruption, litigated medico-legal disputes, acted for practitioners with professional disciplinary complaints and applications for documents under the *Right to Information Act*.
12. In 2018, you spent six months of secondment to the Legal Branch of Queensland Health where you advised on questions of statutory interpretation, coronial investigations, corrupt conduct and natural justice processes. You also spent two years as General Counsel to the Health Quality and Complaints Commission from 2008.

13. As well as your practice, your Honour previously led a team of lawyers to review the Queensland Health portfolio legislation to assessing compatibility with human rights, and you authored the most recent edition of the *Coronial Matters* chapter in the *Queensland Law Handbook* published by the Caxton Legal Centre. That experience will suit your Honour well in this Court.
14. **MAGISTRATE BAIN AND MAGISTRATE FAIRWEATHER**, to become a member of this Court is to answer a call to public service.
15. We know that you have accepted this appointment because you value public service and understand that the reputation of this Court can only be maintained if leading members of the profession are prepared to take on the considerable burden of life as a Magistrate.
16. For that sacrifice and commitment, the legal profession and the broader Queensland community are extremely grateful.
17. We congratulate you on your appointments, assure you of the Bar's ongoing support and wish you all the best for your future on this Court.
18. May it please the court.