

Chief Justice of Queensland, the Honourable Helen Bowskill

The Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

Judge of Appeal, the Honourable David Boddice

Judges of the Trial Division of the Queensland Supreme Court

The Honourable Justice Collier of the Federal Court

Judges of Federal Circuit and Family Court

His Honour, Judge Devereaux S.C., Chief Judge of the District Court, and  
District Court Judges

Magistrates and members of tribunals,

Retired Judges

Senator Paul Scarr, Representing the Honourable Michaelia Cash MP

Legal Services Commissioner Megan Mahon

Elizabeth Bennett S.C. Victorian Bar Vice President

Greg Tolhurst Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Bar Association

Amanda Utt Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Bar Association

Distinguished guests

Ladies And Gentlemen

Can I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of land on which we  
meet – the Turrbal and Jagera/Yaggera people - and pay my respects to their  
Elders, past and present.

Welcome to the Bar Dinner for 2024. Or as I would like to call it, the Bar Party 2024 – or the Bar Partieeee!!!

Because that is what we would like tonight to be – a party – no long speeches and as little formality as possible - so that all of us have a chance to relax, catch up with colleagues and have some fun.

Now on that front, those who know me know I love a party - more particularly I love a dance floor.

I have for the last few years been lobbying our wonderful CEO, Kelsey Risman, about having a dance floor at the Bar Dinner. Danger Will Robinson – she said - No way, No chance, You have got to be kidding. I lost the battle.

Thankfully, last weekend I attended, along with many others from the bar and bench, the wedding of one of our colleagues, Tom Jackson, the son of former Judge of the Supreme Court, David Jackson KC, where I was able to get my dose of the dance floor. It was a great night - but I can just take the opportunity to formally apologise to you, Justice Boddice, for having to watch me bust the moves for several hours. No one should have had to have gone through that – certainly not for the hours that you did. I know there were sights that cannot be unseen – images that will not be quickly forgotten. All I can do is apologise.

Now unfortunately, this dinner clashes with the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ACT Bar Association. Peter Dunning KC, the President of the ABA, and many of the other state presidents are at that dinner tonight and have sent their apologies.

But can I thank those who have travelled from interstate to be with us tonight.

First, Elizabeth Bennett SC, the Vice President of the Victorian Bar. It is great to have with us tonight, Elizabeth. In most states, I would be able to say that you are the incoming President of the Bar. But you are from Victoria – a state where more tickets are run at bar elections than are sold in a school raffle.

Seriously, it is great to have you here. We appreciate you making the effort of coming all this way.

Can I also thank Greg Tolhurst, CEO of the ABA, and Amanda Tutt, CEO of the Victorian Bar for also making the effort.

On a serious note, and I promise it will be the only serious note, one of the initiatives I have sought to bring about since taking on the Presidency is to give greater recognition to those of our current members or past members who have made a valuable contribution to the law, the Association and the Bar. One way we can do that is through recognition of those contributions is at a night like this.

First, to those who have retired since last year's Bar Dinner:

- The Honourable Susan Kiefel AC, Chief Justice High Court of Australia
- His Honour Judge Michael Rackemann District Court of Queensland
- His Honour Judge Stephen Coates Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)
- The Honourable Justice Philip Morrison Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Queensland
- The Honourable Justice Peter Applegarth AM Supreme Court of Queensland

Those appointed to the Bench:

- His Honour Judge Carl Heaton KC District Court of Queensland
- His Honour Judge Joshua Treviño KC District Court of Queensland
- His Honour Judge Benedict Power KC District Court of Queensland
- Coroner Melinda Zerner Coroners Court of Queensland
- Coroner Stephanie Williams Coroners Court of Queensland
- Her Honour Judge Katarina Praskalo KC District Court of Queensland

- Coroner Amanda Bain Coroners Court of Queensland
- The Honourable Justice Michael Copley Supreme Court of Queensland
- The Honourable Justice Rebecca Treston KC Supreme Court of Queensland
- Member Nicholas Loos Land Court of Queensland
- Her Honour Judge Anna Bertone Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)
- Her Honour Judge Amanda Coulthard Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)
- His Honour Judge Philip McCarthy KC District Court of Queensland
- Judge Karen Carmody, National Court and Supreme Court PNG
- Magistrate Mark Schofield Magistrates Court of Queensland
- Magistrate Jakub Lodziak Magistrates Court of Queensland
- Magistrate Lewis Shilito Magistrates Court of Queensland

Those elevated:

- The Honourable Justice Susan Brown Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Queensland
- Her Honour Judge Dzenita Balic District Court of Queensland

As this is the only night when we all come together (and no one turns up to the AGM), I would like tonight to start a tradition of announcing at the Bar Dinner the nominees for Life Membership of the Bar Association of Queensland for that year.

Life membership is the highest honour that the BAQ can give to one of its members. It is awarded for “for exceptional service to justice, the law or the Association”. The nominees are chosen by the President.

Last year the two life members unanimously appointed were John McKenna KC and Kathryn McMillan KC.

This year I would like to announce that the two nominees for life membership are Roger Traves KC and Shane Doyle KC.

Roger and Shane have been leaders of the Bar for many decades. Both served on the Bar Council for many years and then served as President of the BAQ. They served during an extremely difficult time in the history of Queensland so far as relation between the legal fraternity, the court and the executive.

Roger and Shane have given back through many other ways to the law and the profession, from encouraging and mentoring many many juniors, involvement in the BAQ committees, educating the next generation of barristers, acting as ethic counsellors, the list goes on.

I will have more to say at the AGM but on behalf of the Association and all of the Barristers of Queensland, I would like to congratulate Roger and Shane on their nomination and thank them for their valuable contributions to the Association and the Bar.

Finally, as you would know, the Attorney-General is retiring at the next election. I want to publicly thank the Attorney-General for her substantial contribution over the 7 years she has served as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. I especially want to thank the AG for the way in which you reformed the judicial appointment process by introduction of the Judicial Appointment Protocol. That protocol has ensured that the highest quality appointments are made to all levels of the judicial system. We wish you all the best in your post parliamentary life.

Now as promised we are going to keep things short and sweet tonight. We will now have entrée. After entrée we will have the toast to the Judiciary to be

immediately followed by the response – and that will be the end of the formalities. The rest of the night is yours to have fun and catch up with friends.

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The toast to the Judiciary. A poisoned chalice - if ever there was one.

A mission impossible - if one chooses to accept it.

A speech which may not make a career - but can certainly break one.

To give the toast to the Judiciary, Rob Anderson KC.

To respond on behalf of the Judiciary, our former President and the newest kid on the Supreme Court block, Justice Rebecca Treston .

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Ladies and gentlemen, before finishing the formalities tonight, as this will be probably the last time that I have the opportunity to address the Bar as President, can I simply record that it has been the honour of my life to serve as your President and to lead the barristers of Queensland. When I started off in the law I would never have dreamed of being in that position. Can I thank you for your the opportunity to serve and for the encouragement and support you have given me over my years as Vice-President and President.

Now, the rest of the night is yours. If you want to kick on - as we hope some of you will be - we have secured a cordoned off section at Mr Percival's for the Bar – so we will see you there.

Have a fantastic night and good evening.