

**SPEECH BY PETER DUNNING KC AT THE CEREMONIAL SITTING OF THE FULL COURT OF THE FEDERAL
CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA TO WELCOME THE HONOURABLE JUDGE GOODCHILD
AND THE HONOURABLE JUDGE LIOUMIS**

Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice, Judges Goodchild and Lioumis, ladies and gentleman, it is my privilege and pleasure, in equal measure, to stand today on behalf of the barristers throughout Australia, and particularly those in New South Wales, to offer our congratulations on these two stellar appointments to this Court.

Each of their Honours brings to the Court a distinguished background as members of our National Bar. Your Honours join a Court which is essential in the life of Australia. It deals with problems and issues that, in the most fundamental way, touch the lives of many of us — many Australians. In particular, each of your Honours brings a distinguished background in dealing with children who find themselves in the dealings of this particular jurisdiction, something that no doubt will serve you well, and them.

Judge Goodchild, if I may turn to you for a moment. Your Honour joined the Bar in 2005, as we have heard, and it is a matter of sadness to your colleagues at Frederick Jordan Chambers your departure from there. But it is everybody's gain that you have joined this Court. Your Honour had a ranging practice as a barrister. You are, undoubtedly, an expert in family law with a particular interest in children's matters, but you also had a practice in equity, succession, personal injuries, administrative law, Native Title and defamation. It seems hard to imagine a predicament of this Court will throw to your Honour that you will not have had some history of.

Your Honour was on the board of the Women's Legal Services of New South Wales, and as I have prepared for this speech, one of the recurring themes has been your Honour's commitment to the progress of barristers generally, but particularly women, and young women, at the Bar, which is a matter that is important to all of us. Today is an appropriate day to acknowledge the contribution your Honour has made in that regard.

Your Honour, in fact, started your professional life practising in Queensland, and as Mr Murphy, President of the Law Council, will no doubt agree, that is a fine start for anybody who intends to practice in New South Wales.

Your Honour, having had considerable experience in Native Title matters, and in crime, then, when at the Bar, took a particular interest in family law.

I regret to say that I do not have the welter of stories that one likes to have on this occasion. Your Honour's colleagues were miserly to say the least. The best I got, when I inquired on a salacious story, was that your Honour was good at music and liked it, which hardly passed as salacious. If, indeed, the last judge who managed to be so discreet, I suspect, was the now Justice Jagot of the High Court when another barrister at another lectern said of the speech I am presently giving that her Honour must have been in witness protection to have had so little stories about her.

Your Honour appears to have run witness protection, as far as I can tell. Your Honour is tenacious, level-headed. Your Honour is kind and decent. Your Honour will serve the Court with distinction.

Judge Lioumis, you came to the Bar in 2018 with a generation behind you of distinguished practice as a solicitor, which my friend Mr Murphy will speak to. You come from Waratah Chambers, who, like those in Frederick Jordan Chambers, lament the departure of a much-valued colleague, but join us in the enthusiasm of your Honour's appointment.

Like Judge Goodchild, you have a long history of public service, having worked at, amongst other places, Legal Aid. You have a long history of looking out for those in the community most in need, and most requiring of somebody who will vigorously assert their legal rights.

Your colleagues are not nearly so discreet, though, as Judge Goodchild's, as it turns out. They were easy nuts to crack.

I understand, Chief Justice, if you please, that her Honour can walk and chew gum. Not only did your Honour apparently run with considerable aplomb a trial involving parties of Chinese ethnicity, but picked up Mandarin on the way through. On another occasion, when being led by Cummins SC in Newcastle, some less than courteous client on the other side, who was being cross-examined, described you as Cummings SC's helper. In a Court that, no doubt, does repeat business, you never know, you might see him again. I am told you managed to knock a microphone into your leader's eye. It can happen. It can happen to anyone. Less frequent is the Court being adjourned as a result of it, and apparently one of your now-colleagues asked a question of Kearney SC, who was on his feet, and your Honour answered sitting at the bar table.

Your Honour brings to this Court a mastery of each jurisdiction and the warmth and affection of all of your colleagues.

Judge Goodchild, Judge Lioumis, for each of you today is a day of justifiable pride, and for that of your family and friends. Nobody arrives at the position each of you have arrived at today without the love and support of those around them, and it is right that we acknowledge those who have been so very important in your lives. It is a delight they can be here, and a delight for them, and tinged with sadness as, inevitably, there are other special people who do not make a day like today.

On behalf of the barristers of Australia, we thank you very much for your agreement to serve this Court, and wish you many happy years as Judges of the Court.

May it please the Court.

16 March 2023