



**Gabrielle Upton**  
Attorney General

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW GOVERNMENT RAISING BAR ON EQUITABLE BRIEFING**

The NSW Government is engaging female Senior Counsel at record levels, Attorney General Gabrielle Upton announced today.

“Since I became the state’s first female Attorney General in April 2015, I have actively worked to close the opportunity gap between our most senior female barristers and male barristers when it comes to Government work,” Ms Upton said.

“I am proud to announce that under my leadership, in 2015-16, the proportion of female Senior Counsel briefed by Government sky rocketed up almost 20 percent, to 40 per cent of all Government briefs.

“A genuine commitment to equitable briefing is crucial to keeping women in the legal profession and creating a stronger Bar. More than half of the state’s law graduates are female, but many of the brightest minds still face significant barriers during their career when vying for senior roles.”

The NSW Government adopted the Law Council of Australia’s *Equitable Briefing Policy for Female Barristers and Advocates* in 2009 to promote opportunity for female members of the Bar and Ms Upton welcomed the Law Council’s revised Policy released in June this year.

“While I am pleased with the progress we have made in relation to briefing Senior Counsel, we know much more needs to be done to achieve gender equality at the Bar, and I hope the NSW Government will continue to be part of the solution,” Ms Upton said.

“I am closely considering whether the new Policy is appropriate for adoption by NSW Government agencies,” Ms Upton said.

“Clearly cultural change is needed across the broader legal profession and in business to increase opportunity for gifted female practitioners, and I applaud the Law Society of NSW, NSW Bar Association and large law firms for their support of equitable briefing.”

Currently around 90 per cent of Senior Counsel at the NSW Bar are men.

The Attorney General is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Equitable Briefing Policy and approving the engagement of Senior Counsel by NSW Government agencies in accordance with Premier’s Memorandum M2009-17: *Briefing Senior Counsel*.