



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**1 February 2017**

## **ABA THANKS 2016 PRESIDENT PATRICK O’SULLIVAN QC AND WELCOMES IN THE 2017 LAW TERM WITH A NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO**

The Australian Bar Association has welcomed in the 2017 law term with the announcement of the association’s new President, Will Alstergren QC and new CEO, Cindy Penrose.

In announcing the new appointments, the ABA acknowledged the work of 2016 President, Patrick O’Sullivan QC, referencing his tireless efforts and energy invested into advocating for legislation changes to help reduce the nation’s Indigenous incarceration rates.

“Patrick’s work over the past year demonstrates his passion to assist those in our legal system who are most in need. He has been committed to right the social injustice that is the level of Indigenous incarceration, and it is a great testament to him that the Commonwealth Attorney General invited the ABA to partner with the government in the settlement of the Terms of Reference for the upcoming ALRC examination into Indigenous incarceration,” said 2017 ABA President Will Alstergren QC.

In accepting his appointment as ABA President for 2017, Mr Alstergren QC said, “It is a great honour and privilege to represent such a uniquely independent body as the Australian Bar Association. I hope to continue Patrick O’Sullivan’s great work to further promote the availability and quality of Australian barristers, and to act as respected voice of reason and advocate for the wider community.”

Mr Alstergren QC confirmed his plans to continue the ABA’s focus on alternative practical solutions to the challenges presented by the country’s legal assistance budget.

“Australia’s legal assistance services are increasingly under-resourced leaving thousands of Australians without adequate access to quality legal advice and assistance. Of course we need to be looking at ways to increase the funding of legal assistance, but we should also look at how we can deliver justice differently and more efficiently through better use of alternative dispute resolution,” said Mr Alstergren QC.

Mr Alstergren also highlighted his commitment to members to better educate corporate counsel and law firms about the need to have barristers briefed more effectively and earlier in litigation to help clarify the management of the entire dispute resolution process, empower clients to make informed decisions, and potentially reduce overall legal fees.

The ABA has also thanked Philip Selth OAM for his work as the Association's CEO for the period 2015-2017 and has announced the appointment of Cindy Penrose as the ABA's new CEO.

ABA President, Will Alstergren QC said Ms Penrose 'brings a wealth of experience to the ABA at this important stage of its development, and I am confident she will make a significant contribution to the role'.

As the first female CEO of the ABA, Ms Penrose comes with extensive experience both as a criminal lawyer and lecturer, as well as serving the NSW Bar Association as its Senior Policy Lawyer for five years. Ms Penrose holds a master's degree in law and currently sits on the board of the Tristan Jepson Foundation.

**The 2017 ABA Council** – [www.austbar.asn.au/about-the-aba/aba-council](http://www.austbar.asn.au/about-the-aba/aba-council)

**President** - William Alstergren QC  
Past Chairman (2014), The Victorian Bar

**Vice-President** - Christopher Hughes QC  
President, Bar Association of Queensland

**Vice-President** – Noel Hutley SC  
President, New South Wales Bar Association

**Treasurer** - Matthew Howard SC  
President, Western Australian Bar Association

#### **CV – Will Alstergren QC**

Mr Alstergren QC is based in Victoria and has an extensive practice in the Supreme and Federal Courts. He has advised on large commercial matters and is often brought in to lead in specialist areas including company law, trusts, industrial, tax, intellectual property, construction and large complex disputes (including ASIC matters).

Mr Alstergren is a founding member of the committee to set up the Melbourne Arbitration Centre and is a current board member of the Australian Centre for International Arbitration in Sydney.

Will was the founder of the Victorian Bar's Duty Barristers Scheme and won the Victorian Bar's Pro Bono Award in 2012. He is currently completing a PhD in this area. He is a former Chairman of the Victorian Bar Council is also Vice President of the Victorian Olympic Council.

He has also conducted substantial Inquiries for the Royal Australian Navy and is a serving member of the Navy Reserve Legal Panel (Lieutenant Commander).

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