



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 6 December 2018

SEVEN NEW DISTRICT COURT JUDGES APPOINTED

Seven of the state's top barristers, including five Senior Counsel, will become judges of the NSW District Court in February next year as part of the NSW Government's \$150 million package to deliver swifter justice and reduce pressure on the court.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the new additions to the bench are Ian Bourke SC, Sean Grant, Jonathon Priestley SC, Kara Shead SC, Robert Weber SC, Richard Weinstein SC and Nanette Williams.

"Between them, the new judges have amassed more than two centuries of legal experience, the majority spent at the Bar," Mr Speakman said.

"For the first time, the District Court will start the law year with a record 75 permanent judges, paving the way for increased sittings across the state and ensuring the court is in a strong position to tackle the criminal case workload in 2019."

The government's \$150 million package for the District Court will be delivered over four years and includes \$63 million for new judges, sheriff's officers, court staff, jury costs and security upgrades at courthouses.

It also provides \$45 million for additional officers at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, including extra Crown Prosecutors and Witness Assistance Service officers. In addition, there is \$34.5 million for new senior lawyers at Legal Aid NSW, more grants for private practitioners representing legally-aided clients and improvements for regional offices.

Mr Speakman said each of the new judges had impressive careers at the Bar in a range of criminal and civil jurisdictions.

Mr Bourke and Mr Priestley will be sworn in on 4 February, Mr Weber and Ms Shead on 7 February, Mr Weinstein on 11 February, and Ms Williams and Mr Grant on 14 February.

MEDIA: Bryce O'Connor | 0408 549 415