



Law Council  
OF AUSTRALIA

# Ceremonial Sitting of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia – Judge Allyson Ladhams

**Speech delivered via online by Dr Jacoba Brasch QC, President of the Law Council of Australia, at the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, Perth.**

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May it please the Court.

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country on which we all meet, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

It is an honour to be with you all today.

In particular, I acknowledge Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Commonwealth Attorney-General; Chief Justice, The Hon. Justice William Alstergren; all judicial officers; dignitaries and colleagues; and most of all Your Honour; and Your Honour's family, friends and colleagues. I have absolutely no doubt they will all be bursting with immense pride, as they should.

Diversity of the work undertaken by the legal profession is something which ought be heralded from the highest ramparts.

As such, I could not be more pleased to be part of today's ceremony welcoming Your Honour, whose appointment to the Federal Circuit and Family Court follows a career which includes a decade as a solicitor at the Australian Government Solicitor (AGS).

The work of our colleagues within the public sector is often and regrettably 'unsung'.  
Unsung, but so very important.

Indeed, if we take the Australian Government Solicitor as an example, the lawyers working there are involved in the largest and most sensitive matters affecting the Australian Government and subsequently the Australian people.

Your Honour, your expertise and passion, particularly with regards to judicial review and migration law, will serve all those who come before you. As will your ability to think creatively, delve deep into matters and consider a multitude of options to reach the best solution.

Speaking with people who have worked closely with you reveals the infectious energy and enthusiasm you have for the law. That said, you have the closest and tightest group of friends and colleagues – usually someone is prepared to spill a little tea with some amusing anecdote, but yours remained tight lipped to the last.

But all spoke of your zeal for the law, which at its heart, is about people and you genuinely care about people. Your interest in and support for others shone through with all those I talked with.

You generously share your knowledge and step up to help without hesitation. These qualities will enrich your workplace and the broader community.

I also trust you will continue mentoring members of the profession, within the confines allowed by your judicial office.

I note that Your Honour's appointment comes during what has been one of the most challenging times our nation has faced in recent memory.

I commend Madam Attorney-General, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash for prioritising appointments to the Court, including the appointment of Your Honour.

A strong, effective and properly resourced judicial system is always vital, but its importance has never been more clearly demonstrated than over the past year and a half.

Chief Justice Alstergren recently wrote to the profession thanking its members for their exceptional work since the outbreak of COVID-19.

I take this opportunity to return those words of gratitude to the Chief and all the Judges, Registrars and staff of the Courts who have laboured tirelessly to ensure the wheels of justice continue to turn, despite lockdowns, lock outs and restrictions.

Through a mix of innovation, flexibility and just plain hard work, the Court has maintained access to justice for the Australian community, especially those in urgent need of assistance.

Your Honour Judge Ladhams, I congratulate you on your elevation and look forward to watching what will no doubt be your valuable contribution to the administration of justice.

May it please the court.

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