## The Hon Justice Peter Hall



On 8 March 2005, Peter Hall QC was sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. His Honour was called to the Bar on 26 July 1974, having practised as a solicitor with Dawson Waldron. He took silk in 1991.

His Honour has had a varied and successful practice at the Bar, with a reputation for thorough preparation and fairness. His Honour has developed

considerable expertise as an advocate appearing before royal commissions and other special commissions of inquiry, in particular, the royal commission into the events at Chelmsford hospital, the ICAC inquiry into the Walsh Bay redevelopment tender process and assisting the royal commission into the building industry before commissioners Gyles QC and Holland QC.

Serving as an assistant ICAC commissioner in 1995 and 1996, and more recently as an assistant ICAC commissioner until last month, his Honour was senior counsel assisting the special commission of inquiry into the Waterfall rail accident.

His Honour's dedication to hard work and the task at hand has often involved family sacrifices. During the Waterfall inquiry his Honour and his wife Trish moved out of the family home with their children to take up residence in the caretaker's flat at the Engadine signal box. The décor of the premises was apparently reminiscent of eighth floor of Selborne Chambers.

His Honour has written widely and published several texts, including *Unconscionable contracts and economic duress* in 1985 and most recently *Investigating corruption and misconduct in public office:* Commissions of inquiry – powers and procedures published in 2004.

His Honour's appointment to the Supreme Court has been universally acclaimed by the barristers of New South Wales, wishing him a satisfying and rewarding life as a judge.

Ian Harrison SC, speaking on behalf of the Bar, commented on the fashion in the 'so-called popular press publicly to assail judges in this state and throughout the country'. This fashion is urged by 'an unrepresentative coven of journalists with a wicked agenda'. Their scrutiny could be avoided, said Harrison SC, by 'working seven days a week, accepting no pay, taking no holidays and never making the slightest mistake whether on or off the bench. Overseas travel should be avoided, if at all possible'.

Fittingly, Harrison SC added in his speech before the court that: 'You join today a powerful bench of dedicated women and men whose own fearless reputation for hard work and independence you will continue to enhance.'

