

District Court appointments

Her Honour Judge Julia Baly SC

Judge Julia Baly SC was sworn-in as judge of the District Court on 1 September 2014.

Her Honour's career has encompassed prosecution and defence, as well as domestic and international criminal law. She graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts in 1985 and Bachelor of Laws in 1987. She was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in December 1987. During her legal studies she worked as a research officer at BOCSAR, the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. In 1988 she worked as a solicitor at the Grafton office of the Aboriginal Legal Service, and instructed counsel in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

In May 1989 her Honour moved to the Office of the DPP in Sydney, where she prepared District Court matters. In November of that year she commenced work at the Newcastle office, appearing in short matters. In November 1990 she was appointed as a senior solicitor there, instructing Crown prosecutors in District and Supreme Court trials and appearing on behalf of the Crown in short matters.

Her Honour began practising at the bar in August 1995. She read with Peter Harper in Church Street Chambers, Newcastle and did her criminal reading with Liz Fullerton in Sydney. For a while she remained at the Newcastle Bar, before taking a room in Forbes Chambers. She appeared in complex and

serious criminal trials in the District and Supreme courts, as well as Court of Criminal Appeal and High Court cases.

In 1999 her Honour took leave from the bar to serve as a trial attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. As part of her work with the tribunal she was assigned to a number of cases, the most notable being in connection with frequent, horrendous violations of human rights at a camp in the town of Prejidor, where ethnic cleansing and rape were used as weapons of war.

In 2002 her Honour returned to Australia, whereupon she was appointed as a crown prosecutor. In 2005 her Honour returned to Europe when she was appointed as an international prosecutor to the Special Department for War Crimes in the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

In 2008 her Honour worked as an attorney for the Office of the Prosecutor, as co-counsel to prosecutor Brenda Hollis, at The Special Court for Sierra Leone, where former president Charles Taylor was tried for sponsoring atrocities in that country's bloody civil war. When not prosecuting war criminals her Honour was a deputy senior Crown prosecutor in country NSW, based in Lismore and handling the full range of criminal matters. Her Honour took silk in 2013.

Her Honour Judge Jane Culver

Judge Jane Culver was sworn-in as a District Court judge on 29 October 2014. Her Honour graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of New South Wales in 1989, and she was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court in December of that same year. For two years she was employed as a solicitor at Mallesons Stephen Jaques and in 1991, when she accepted a position at the New South Wales Crime Commission. In 1996 she moved to the Office of the DPP and became a trial advocate. Her Honour was called to the bar in 2002 whereupon she practised as a Crown

prosecutor. In August 2004 her Honour was appointed as a magistrate of the Local Court, and subsequently as a children's magistrate and coroner. Six years later she was elevated to the position of deputy chief magistrate. One of her Honour's key responsibilities in that role was continuing education and there is widespread praise for the work she did, such as in the deployment of information technology in the Local Court, including iPads for magistrates.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Chris O'Brien

Magistrate Christopher O'Brien was sworn-in as a deputy chief magistrate on Monday, 3 November 2014. As a solicitor, his Honour served with distinction on the Law Society's Criminal Law Committee for many years. His Honour was appointed as a magistrate of the Local Court in February 2007. Since then, he has sat in most local courts in the outer

Sydney metropolitan area, such as Liverpool, Camden and Campbelltown as well as in the Parramatta Children's Court. In April last year he was appointed coordinating civil magistrate in the Downing Centre.