

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first edition of *Bar News* for 2017. We are delighted to include in this issue an interview with the new attorney general, the Hon Mark Speakman SC MP.

Many readers will know the attorney from his long time at the bar. He practised for many years on Tenth Floor Chambers, with an exceptionally busy commercial practice.

In his interview the attorney identifies his key priorities as including reducing court delays, reducing rates of reoffending and reducing repeat domestic violence rates. The attorney also addresses the

*The start of 2017 saw the commencement of the Donald Trump presidency, an event which has inspired a number of members to go into print.*

funding cuts to community legal centres, which have been announced by the Commonwealth government from July 2017. In New South Wales alone the cut in funding amounts to some \$2.9 million per annum.

The attorney says that he is doing what he can to persuade the Federal Government to reverse these cuts, saying that: 'Community legal centres are a fabulous resource and they do a great job for our community.' In particular, in his *Bar News* interview the attorney refers to the role legal centres play in providing access to justice.

The start of 2017 saw the commencement of the Donald Trump presidency, an event which has inspired a number of

members to go into print. This issue contains a piece by Justin Hewitt examining the nature of, and sources of power for, various executive orders issued by President Trump. These include his most controversial executive order to date, namely the travel ban which was announced on the evening of Friday, 27 January 2017, and which, among other things, suspended for 90 days the entry of persons into the United States from various Muslim majority countries and also imposed an indefinite ban on the entry of Syrian refugees. As recounted by Justin Hewitt this order was in due course stayed by the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Elsewhere, Dr Christopher Ward SC considers whether the election of President Trump will herald a Brexit style rush to withdraw from particular treaty obligations of the United States and, if so, what treaties might be exposed to a real risk of withdrawal or denunciation. In an opinion piece addressing criticisms of the judiciary Anthony Cheshire SC includes an examination of some of the criticisms President Trump has made of various judges in the US, including in relation to rulings on the travel ban discussed above.

In matters closer to home this issue also includes a piece by the senior vice president of the Bar Association, Arthur Moses SC, looking at the association's recent Wellbeing survey, which seeks to identify member concerns and to assist in managing their health and well-being. Moses SC observes: 'There has been a worrying increase in the incidence of mental health issues concerning barristers coming before the Bar Council and the Executive.'

In another piece, Ingmar Taylor SC describes a new policy recently implemented by Greenway Chambers which allows a member to take a period of six months leave free of rent and chambers fees following the birth or

adoption of a child. Taylor SC comments that: 'The structure of the New South Wales Bar dissuades female law graduates from becoming barristers and makes it more difficult to retain those who do come to the bar'. Greenway Chambers' new policy is intended as a step towards changing this.

In the review section, we are pleased to include the address by the chief justice at the recent launch of Max Bonnell's book, *I Like a Clamour*, a biography of Judge John Walpole Willis. We also have the address given by the Hon Keith Mason QC at the launch of the new edition of Justice Paul Finn's *Fiduciary Obligations* and an accompanying volume, *Finn's Law*, a book of essays.

Lastly, this issue includes a piece by Justice Slattery commemorating the life of Colonel Henry Normand MacLaurin, who was killed by a Turkish sniper on 27 April 1915, just two days after landing at Gallipoli. At the time Colonel MacLaurin was one of Sydney's leading junior barristers. We hope to include in future issues of *Bar News* some further pieces documenting the lives of New South Wales barristers who fought in the First World War.

**Jeremy Stoljar SC**  
Editor