

DPP: confidence & efficiency are critical

Len Flanagan, QC is the NT's first Director of Public Prosecutions, and his top priority is getting the DPP's office working quickly and efficiently. The veteran of Victoria's prosecution system said he wanted the public to have confidence in the DPP's office. "My overriding priority is to make the community aware that we have a criminal prosecution process which is totally independent and will operate without fear or favour," he said.

Public confidence

"We will hear submissions from anyone who wants to make them and we will consider them according to whatever weight we think should be attached to them, be they from police, politicians or a community group. "I want the public to have confidence in the overall administration of justice because I think most people generally expect courts to deal with people in a manner which gives them confidence that they are being protected so they

can go about their daily affairs untroubled by intrusion," he said.

"It's the old legal cliché: justice delayed is justice denied.

"Public perception is very important, and if we don't have the confidence of the public then we'll flounder.

Driver's seat

"I suppose it's all highly idealistic, but someone has got to have the goal and I seem to be in the driver's seat for that purpose, so I have to do my best to achieve that," Mr Flanagan said.

He said he would achieve his priority by liaising with the relevant groups and individuals.

"I propose to liaise with everybody involved in the criminal process from the moment the accused is apprehended until the moment the person is finally disposed of by the courts.

"I'll do that with a view to determine where there are problems in relation to prosecution and where our problems occur.

"Then I'll try to eliminate some of the delays and inefficiencies I detect in the system.

"I want to liaise with the Police Commissioner, the listing authorities in the courts, the magistrates and judges, and especially the practitioners who operate independently.

"The basic idea is to achieve co-operation among all of us so that the job is easier and the criminal justice machine turns over more quickly in the interests of all, with the paramount aim being the improvement of justice," he said.

Mr Flanagan was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in Victoria in 1957. He practised at the Bar for about eight years, then took a position as a Crown Prosecutor.

In 1977 he was appointed Chief Crown Prosecutor and in 1979 Crown Counsel.

Mr Flanagan spent a good deal of time as Acting Solicitor General and Director of Public Prosecutions in Victoria.

Appointments of interest

Stephen Pendrill Charles (appointed Queen's Counsel in the NT 31/1/91)
Gregory Howard Garde (appointed Queen's Counsel in the NT 31/1/91)
Ross McKenzie Robson (appointed Queen's Counsel in the NT 31/1/91)
Nahum Mushin (Appointed Judge, Family Court of Australia)
Arthur Cameron Fitzgerald (re-appointed to the Trade Practices Tribunal)
Dr Barry Ian Aldrich (re-appointed to the Trade Practices Tribunal)

Johanna Plante (Associate Member, Trade Practices Commission)
Dr David Cousins (Associate Member, Trade Practices Commission)
Helen Vorrath (re-appointed to the Administrative Review Council)
Stuart Hamilton (re-appointed, Administrative Review Council)
Iain Ross (appointed to the Administrative Review Council)
David Hollway (appointed to the Administrative Review Council)
Clare Petre (appointed to the Admin-

istrative Review Council)
Lindsay James Curtis (appointed to the Copyright Tribunal)
Michael Black, QC (appointed Chief Justice of the Federal Court)
Leonard George Glare (appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Family Court)
Dr Gavan Griffith (reappointed C/W Solicitor-General)
William Gurry (appointed Companies & Securities Advisory Committee)