

### His Honour Judge Gregory Farmer SC

Gregory Farmer SC was sworn in as a judge of the District Court on 15 September 2015. Attorney General Gabrielle Upton spoke on behalf of the New South Wales Bar.

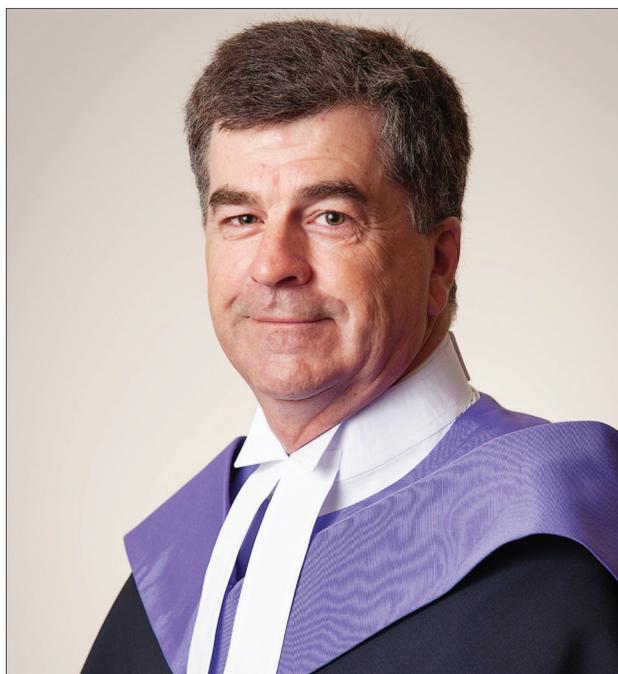


Photo: Gilliane Tedder

His Honour graduated from Macquarie University in 1983 with a Bachelor of Laws while working full-time with the Magistrates Courts Administration. In the early years of his Honour's practise as a solicitor he worked as a legal officer with the Department of Corrective Services. He later worked as a solicitor at the office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. His Honour was called to the bar in 1990.

Just prior to becoming a barrister, his Honour instructed Barry Toomey QC in the matter of a solicitor who was found to have committed fraud to the extent of \$4 million. Mr Toomey, with whom his Honour subsequently joined in private practice in the same chambers, has said that his Honour is a calm and judicious lawyer and that he has never known anyone who could be more perfectly suited in temperament and in conduct to be a judge.

After being admitted as a barrister, his Honour was appointed to the position of in-house counsel at the DPP, appearing on behalf of the Crown in jury trials in the District Court and as junior counsel in Supreme Court trials, and on many occasions in the Court of Criminal Appeal. His Honour also appeared in the Federal Court, the Supreme Court and the District Court in sentence matters, appeals and proceeds of crime matters. His work contributed to the development of case law and legislative amendment in one instance.

His Honour was also briefed by the Directors of Public Prosecutions for the Commonwealth, New South Wales, ACT

and the Northern Territory, and by the Australian and New South Wales Crime Commissions. His Honour, after coming to the private bar, also acted as counsel for the defence and developed a civil practice; was involved in numerous public inquiries including as counsel assisting the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Police Integrity Commission; and appeared for plaintiffs and defendants in the Dust Diseases Tribunal and related appeals to the Court of Appeal. He was appointed senior counsel in October 2011.

Ms Upton noted that Judge Henson, chief magistrate of New South Wales (whose friendship with his Honour stretches back to the days his Honour and Judge Henson played cricket together in the late 70s and early 80s at the Petty Sessions Justice Cricket Club, of which Judge Henson was the captain) has commented that his Honour is a 'good bloke'. Ms Upton also noted that Judge Henson also described his Honour as a laconic and a laid back individual with the ability to see humour in life.

Ms Upton stated:

Your Honour understands what it is like to navigate the entire criminal process, something that will be appreciated by those who appear before you in the District Court, I am sure.

One particular case that has been brought to my attention was where your Honour was lead counsel in relation to 14 prosecutions arising from the Villawood Detention Centre riots; not many barristers could claim to having dealt with 14 different opponents in one trial. The instructing solicitor at the Commonwealth DPP has noted that the constant composure that you maintained in dealing with the demands of all those legal representatives was admirable.

Mr Eades echoed the Attorney's remarks on behalf of the many solicitors with whom his Honour had worked.

His Honour, in the course of thanking many who have provided friendship and support during his professional life, paid tribute to his mother who parented a large family in difficult circumstances. His Honour aspired, in this next phase of his professional life - as he had since childhood - to live up to his mother's favourite challenge: 'Answer the question'.

Ms Upton's concluding remarks were a fitting summation:

It goes without saying that your Honour's appointment was only a natural progression of your legal career. Given your outstanding ability, your intelligence, your reserve and vast experience, I have no doubt when I say this, for the great benefit of the people of this State that you have taken the robes of a judge of the District Court.