



## Jose Crespo 1964 - 2017

**Eulogy for Jose Crespo given by Lloyd Babb SC, the NSW Director of Public Prosecutions at the Mary Mother of Mercy Chapel, Rookwood on Monday 27 November 2017.**

I have known Jose for twenty five years. I count him as a good friend. Today, I'm here to speak of his extraordinary contribution and service to the State New South Wales, and the grief his passing has brought to his colleagues and friends at the DPP and in the wider legal profession.

Jose started with the Office of The Director of Public Prosecutions in 1989, not long after he graduated from the University of Sydney. The Office opened in 1987, so Jose was there from the early days. He started as a legal officer in one of the trial groups, and in less than two years was promoted to a senior solicitor role.

In 1996, Jose was admitted to the Bar, and Jose left the office to work as a barrister first at the Trust Chambers, and later 3 Selbourne and then Ada Evans Chambers.

Jose came back to the DPP in 2001 when he was appointed a Crown Prosecutor.

Jose's professional achievements are impressive. Most recently he headed the Pre-trial unit of my Sydney Office. He was in that role because he was very careful and thorough and because he had impeccable judgment.

He was just reaching the zenith of his career, and there is no doubt in my mind that he would have continued further up the ranks of his chosen profession.

A great prosecutor has a mix of qualities – knowledge of the criminal law, experience, fairness, emotional intelligence, compassion and a commitment to justice. Jose had all of those qualities.

That is exemplified by the feedback received from prosecutors, defence lawyers and judges about the news of Jose's death:

One solicitor told me this week about how Jose made his junior colleagues feel so valued and respected. When he was reviewing their work he would invariably put a note on it about how

valuable he found their analysis of the case.

The solicitor responsible for briefing Crown Prosecutors in Sydney said of Jose:

I have been briefing Jose with his matters over so many years and Jose was able to turn his hand to any type of matter, Robbery, Murder, CSA, Historical CSA and Drug prosecutions. He was dedicated and prepared all his matters carefully and dealt with them with a great deal of enthusiasm. Looking through the diaries he had a large number of long and short trials over these many years.

Barristers from the Public Defender's Chambers said the following things:

- Jose was a generous and genuine man, and a fine Crown Prosecutor ...
- He was an incredibly nice and decent man and a very fair and competent Crown. ...
- This is very sad for the legal profession and more so for his family ...
- Jose was a good man and a fair crown ...

A Supreme Court Judge said of Jose:

I was upset to learn of Jose Crespo's sudden death.

As you know, Jose had been appearing for the Crown in recent Arraignments Lists and he discharged that function in a highly efficient and effective way which always assisted the Court. He was, as well, always pleasant in his dealings with the Court and other members of the profession. Likewise, Jose was highly professional and courteous in his dealings with [my associate] which played an important part in the ongoing management of the Arraignments List.

Alister Henskens SC, NSW Legislative Assembly member for Kuringai gave a detailed and heartfelt speech last week in Parliament about Jose. It will forever be available on Hansards. He finished by saying:

Jose was a consummate professional ... Our state has lost a loyal and talented servant.

These professional achievements, however, don't stand alone. They mean so much more when you consider the kind of man Jose was.

Jose was a lovely man. There is no other way to describe him. He was lovely in the sense that he was much loved. He was a very positive force within the Office. He participated in the Office Yoga class. In yoga he displayed enthusiasm more than expertise and he always made us laugh. He was a great friend and a great listener when others needed his ear. Jose's kindness was legendary. He would reach out to people in strife without judgment, and help any way he could. He was cheerful and positive. He never had a harsh word to say about anyone and people who have known him decades – myself included – never heard anyone say anything bad about him.

Jose was polite and courteous at all times, to all people. He treated people with respect. He never forgot his humble beginnings.

Jose moved at a thousand miles an hour but he had a gentleness about him that is the trademark of kind people: he spoke softly and calmly. He loved dogs he talked still about the venerable Rumpole, his beloved dog who died a few years ago. He loved football and would have loved to have seen Australia qualify for another World Cup. He loved his friends and colleagues. Most of all he adored his two teenage sons, Liam and Zachary. Boys, he loved you very much and spoke about you all the time. He loved his family and was especially close to his father.

He was a great barrister, a respected Crown and a truly lovely man.

Jose, thank you for your service to this state, and to the people of NSW. Thank you for your contributions to the criminal justice system, which you honoured with skill and respect throughout your career.

Thank you for the gift of your time, which you gave freely and generously to your colleagues and friends.

Thank you for all those great times you made us laugh.