



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations**

Wednesday, April 1, 2009

NEW JUDGE FOR THE LAND AND ENVIRONMENT COURT

Sydney barrister and NSW Bar Association secretary Rachel Pepper has been appointed a judge of the Land and Environment Court of NSW, Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

In a 14-year legal career, Ms Pepper has served as an Associate to former High Court judge The Hon Michael McHugh QC AC. She has also appeared as a barrister in all NSW courts, most of the state's tribunals and in the High Court of Australia.

"Ms Pepper has worked on a range of cases involving environmental and planning issues and is familiar with the processes of the Land and Environment Court," Mr Hatzistergos said.

Last year, she appeared at the coronial inquest into the fatal collapse of the Pacific Highway on the NSW Central Coast. She also recently appeared at the Special Inquiry into the Conviction of Phuong Ngo, who is serving a life sentence for the 1994 murder of Cabramatta MP, John Newman.

Ms Pepper will join the bench of the Land and Environment Court on 1 May 2009.

"I congratulate Ms Pepper on her appointment and wish her well for the next stage of her career," Mr Hatzistergos said.

Media Contact: Simon Crittle 0400 477 924