



Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

19 DECEMBER 2013

TWO NEW MAGISTRATES FOR NSW TO COME FROM THE DPP

Attorney General Greg Smith SC today announced the appointments of deputy senior crown prosecutor Peter Barnett SC and DPP solicitor Kate Thompson as magistrates of the Local Court of NSW and as industrial magistrates.

Mr Barnett and Ms Thompson have worked for the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for most of their careers.

For more than a decade, Mr Barnett has served as the deputy senior crown prosecutor at Newcastle and has been responsible for the management of 19 crown prosecutors attached to the regional offices of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

“Mr Barnett is a seasoned criminal barrister who has prosecuted some of the most difficult and complex trials to be heard during circuit sittings of the Supreme and District Courts,” Mr Smith said.

“He has also worked as an educator and mentor within the legal profession, providing guidance and advice for DPP lawyers in the areas of advocacy, criminal law, evidence, practice and procedure in the Local, District and Supreme Courts.”

Mr Barnett has lectured in criminal law at the University of Newcastle and given presentations to NSW Police, sexual assault counsellors, medical practitioners and community groups. He has performed almost all of this work on a pro bono basis.

Mr Barnett was admitted to the Bar in 1980 and appointed a crown prosecutor in 1988. He was appointed as a Senior Counsel in 2007.

Ms Thompson has been a lawyer for 14 years, working primarily as a Local Court advocate for the DPP.

“Ms Thompson has appeared on countless occasions in the Local Court in relation to bail applications, committal and summary hearings and sentencing proceedings,” Mr Smith said.

“Her experience in the Local Court and her understanding of its processes will no doubt be of great assistance when she takes her position on the bench.”

During her time at the DPP, Ms Thompson has also appeared in the District and Supreme Court, and worked as a senior lawyer at the Drug Court. Most recently, she was a senior professional assistant within the Director’s Chambers.

Ms Thompson has taken a number of secondments during her career. She worked for the Criminal Law Review Division of the NSW Attorney General's Department in 2001 and as a Senior Legal Officer at the Health Care Complaints Commission between 2006 and 2008.

Mr Barnett and Ms Thompson will be sworn in as magistrates and industrial magistrates on 24 February 2014.

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