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THE SUPREME COURT OF

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WELCOME TO THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE SEAWARD

FULL BENCH

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT PERTH ON THURSDAY, 23 MARCH 2023, AT 4.16 PM

QUINLAN CJ: The Court sits this afternoon to welcome the Honourable Justice Fiona Seaward as a judge of the Court. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which the Court sits this afternoon, the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging. We warmly welcome members of her Honour's family who are here: her Honour's husband, Terry, and their sons, Henry and Lachlan, her Honour's mother, Barbara, and parents-in-law, Margaret and Norman, and her Honour's sister, Kate; her Honour's other sister, Clare, and her brother, Timothy, could not be here, but I'm reliably informed are watching by video link, and we welcome many other members of her Honour's extended family.

We also welcome many other distinguished guests here this afternoon, including the Honourable Justices Darren Jackson and Michael Feutrill of the Federal Court of Australia, Senior Judge Andrew Stavrianou, and their Honours Judges Fiona Vernon, Sarah Russell, Natalie Whitby and Henry Jackson of the District Court of Western Australia. Mr Joshua Thomson SC, Solicitor-General for Western Australia, Ms Joanne Stampalia, Executive Director Courts and Tribunal Services, Ms Kelly Martinelli, Executive Manager of the Supreme Court, Acting State Solicitor, Angela Komninos, Director of Public Prosecutions, Robert Owen and Assistant Director Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, Martyn Plummer, together with many past members of this and other courts.

Finally, I welcome those who will address the Court this afternoon, the Honourable John Quigley MLA, Attorney General of Western Australia, Ms Paula Wilkinson, Senior Vice President of the Law Society of Western Australia, and Mr Brahma Dharmananda SC, President of the WA Bar Association. Justice Seaward's appointment fills a vacancy arising from the recent retirement of his Honour Justice Jeremy Allanson.

Justice Allanson preferred to retire from the Court with as little fanfare as possible and so I now take this opportunity on behalf of the Court publicly to acknowledge and thank the Honourable Jeremy Allanson for his contribution to the administration of justice over more than 12 years of dedicated service to the Court and the people of Western Australia as a judge of this Court. Like Justice Allanson, before her Justice Seaward comes to this Court as a recognised leader in the field of constitutional and administrative law, having served as a barrister and solicitor the State Solicitor's Office for over 22 years,

attaining the positions of Senior Assistant State Counsel and Acting Deputy State Solicitor.

Her Honour's legal knowledge and expertise and her capacity for objective, clear and precise submissions which always cut to the heart of any legal issue have been greatly welcomed and valued, not only in this Court but in the High Court of Australia where her Honour practised in the demanding work of Federal constitutional law. Her Honour's excellence in the practice of the law, especially in advocacy, which was recognised by her Honour's appointment as Senior Counsel, extended to all facets of the work of the State Solicitor's Office.

The breadth of her Honour's experience in the law are evident in her Honour's significant contribution to law reform over many years, including as a Commissioner of the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia and as a member of expert ministerial panels in relation to complex issues of social and legal importance. It is characteristic of those who act for and advise Government at the very highest levels that much of their work takes place out of the spotlight and without the kind of public recognition often afforded to some of their more conspicuous colleagues in private practice.

Indeed, it can be said that the best and most important advice given to Executive Government as to the limits of public power will, for that very reason, be the sort of advice that we never hear about. A person who gives objective and impartial advice to a powerful institution, for example, whether that institution is a Government or a private entity, that it should not take some particular course of action for legal or ethical reasons must, therefore, do so in the sure knowledge that the success of that advice will be measured by the extent to which it remains unknown and unacknowledged.

The confidentiality that attends the appointment of judges is such that when a person is asked by the Government whether they would be prepared to accept appointment, the pool of persons from whom they may seek advice or counsel is very small indeed and usually confined to close family and a small number of trusted colleagues. Fortunately for me, I am one of the persons to whom a person considering appointment is permitted to turn.

I mention this because when Justice Seaward was invited to consider appointment to the Court, I was able to speak with her Honour. In the course of our conversation, her Honour remarked that she was surprised that she had

been asked to join the Court. In addition to making clear my own view as to her Honour's undoubted expertise and capacity for the job, I remarked to her Honour that I would prefer that the bench of the Court was full of people who were surprised to have been asked than by a bench full of people who regarded it as their birthright or who wondered why they had not been asked earlier.

That is because in addition to knowledge, integrity and expertise, an essential, although often neglected judicial virtue, without which those other qualities might be lost is humility. We can sometimes forget what a truly awesome responsibility it is to sit in judgment of our fellow citizens and beyond, awesome in the literal sense of inspiring awe. It is no small thing to sit in judgment of another human being and while it is essential to the administration of justice that judges have the necessary legal qualifications, training and experience, it is also essential to the discharge of our responsibility that, at some level, we regard ourselves as not quite up to the task.

Put simply, it is only with some sense of our own inadequacy for the task that we are able to fully grasp the importance and seriousness of the role that we are privileged to undertake. Justice Seaward's many years of service in providing calm and respectful assistance to the Executive and the courts alike make clear that in addition to her Honour's undoubted knowledge, integrity and expertise, she also brings to the Court that quality of humility so essential to the judicial office.

It only remains for me on behalf of the Court to express how pleased we are, Justice Seaward, to have you join us on the Court and bring all your talents and qualities to our work and to extend our warm welcome to you, Terry, Henry and Lachlan to the community of the Court and to assure you of our continued solicitude and support throughout what will no doubt be a distinguished judicial career. Yes, Mr Attorney.

QUIGLEY, MR: May it please the Court, and thank you, Chief Justice Quinlan. I would like to commence also by joining you in - at the welcome this afternoon by paying my respects to the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation upon whose lands the Court convenes this evening. It is my great honour to appear here today on behalf of the State of Western Australia and the Government of Western Australia and, indeed, the people of Western Australia to welcome the Honourable Justice Fiona Seaward to the Supreme Court of

Western Australia. I also extend my warm welcome to Justice Seaward's family and friends, who are here with us today, especially, to her husband, Terry, and to her sons, Henry and Lachlan, other family members, including your mother, your sister, Kate, your parents-in-law, Margaret and Norman.

I also welcome your sister, Clare, and Timothy, whom I believe are watching by video link, and several members of your extended family, including some of your aunts and uncles, who have travelled from other parts of Australia, such as Queensland and South Australia, to be with us to celebrate your appointment. Your Honour is eminently suited for judicial appointment. Your Honour has over 20 years' experience as a public lawyer and is widely recognised as having one - as one of the finest lawyers in the State Solicitor's Office.

It is fair to say that, as a public lawyer, your Honour has done it all. And that was clear to the Cabinet when they were considering your appointment. You've appeared in trials and courts of all levels, including the Supreme Court and the Federal Court. You have acted as counsel in Royal Commissions, and you have made submissions in complex matters in the High Court and before the WA Court of Appeal. You have also provided advice to ministers and Government departments at the highest level.

Notably, your Honour has appeared on behalf of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in the high-profile commissions - commission - Royal Commission, should I say - I beg your pardon - into the Perth Casino. As your Honour has often appeared in the High Court as the junior of choice for whomever happened to be the current Solicitor General, you were well known for your thorough and well-researched written submissions.

Your Honour has also found time amongst all of this to do a number of other things of legal significance. You have obtained a Masters of Law with merit from the Australian National University. You have acted as Deputy State Solicitor, running one of the litigation teams in the State Solicitor's Office. You have taken on the role of a law reform commissioner for four years and been a member of expert panels into the assisted reproductive technology and voluntarily assisted dying.

Your Honour was appointed silk last year in recognition of your formidable contribution to the legal profession. While your journey from silk to judicial appointment has been remarkably short, it should also be

put into context. I'm told that representations were made to you by Senior Counsel for at least the last three years prior to that, but you would not do so. Many people consider that you have been performing at the level of Senior Counsel for some years now.

And that observation reflects something else about your Honour. You bring true humility to this role as a judge. Time and again, when people have mentioned your Honour, they have spoken about your Honour's good judgment as well as your Honour's no-nonsense approach and friendly demeanour. I've been informed that you will be sadly missed at the State Solicitor's Office by those who have worked under you and whom you mentored.

You have been highly popular - a very highly popular role model within the Office of the State Solicitor. Your Honour's appointment, as the Chief Justice said, is to replace the Honourable Jeremy Allanson, who retired last month. I should also like to pause and acknowledge the Honourable Jeremy Allanson's long and diligent service to this Court. He was - he also was one of the finest public lawyers in the State and followed a similar pathway to your Honour through the State Solicitor's Office.

I am absolutely confident that your Honour will be a worthy replacement. As I have outlined, your Honour will ensure that the Supreme Court maintains the expertise in the field of public law. Justice Seaward, your appointment to the Court is a testament to your hard work, your dedication to the legal profession. You bring to the Court a wealth of experience and expertise that will serve the people of Western Australia very well.

On behalf of the Government of Western Australia and the people of Western Australia, I congratulate you on your appointment and wish you all the very best as you begin this new chapter in your service of the people of our great State, may it please the Court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Mr Attorney. Yes, Ms Wilkinson.

WILKINSON, MS: May it please the Court, the Law Society joins in acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. On the Society's behalf, I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. Your Honour, it's a great privilege to appear here today on behalf of the President of the Law Society of Western Australia to welcome you to the bench of this Honourable Court.

I welcome and congratulate members of your Honour's family who are here today as well, your husband, Terry, who's also a member of the Law Society Council, and your sons, Henry and Lachlan. I also mention your mother, Beverley, and your sister, Kate, and your aunts and uncles present here today, Aunty Robin from Adelaide, Uncle John from Queensland, Uncle Malcolm and Pat, Aunty Susan and John, and I also welcome and congratulate your sister, Clare, who, sadly, can't be here today but is watching us from London with Timothy.

I acknowledge friends and colleagues here today, distinguished guests and members of the judiciary. In preparation for today, I was fortunate enough to meet with your Honour, and I would now like to share a little of what I've learned of your Honour's life. Your Honour was born in Kununurra, and your entire school education took place in country Western Australia. Your Honour went to school in various country primary schools before attending Harvey Agricultural Senior High School, from which you graduated as dux in 1994.

When you were thinking what you might do at university, you considered journalism, but definitely not science. Whatever you were going to do, you knew that your strength was in the written word, perhaps also in the spoken word, as you liked debating. Once you started law school, you knew you wanted to be a lawyer. What is interesting is that, technically, you were the first in your family to attend university.

I say "technically" because your mother and grandmother were both school teachers and attended teachers collages. Equivalent teaching courses these days are available in universities. But you most certainly were the first in your family to attend law school. Your Honour was admitted as a legal practitioner in 1999 after completing a Bachelor of Laws with first class honours and a BCom at the University of Western Australia.

In 2001, you graduated with an LLM with merit from the Australian National University. After commencing as an article clerk at the then Crown Solicitor's Office in 2000, your Honour was admitted to practice in Western Australia in February 2001. Your Honour has now served 22 years as a barrister and solicitor in the State Solicitor's Office, becoming senior State - assistant State counsel in 2014 and acting Deputy State Solicitor in 2021.

When you became Acting Deputy State Solicitor, you became responsible for all public litigation. This

involved overseeing a team of approximately 23 lawyers, all doing public law, general and commercial litigation and tax work. And as well as all that overseeing, you had your own file load. You were a member of the Law Reform Commission for Western Australia in - from 2015 to 2019, and you served as a member of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Ministerial Panel in 2019 and the Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Legislation Ministerial Expert Panel in 2022.

You were appointed as a judge of this Court on 21 February 2023. While we were talking, you described yourself as a generalist litigator, but I suggest that you are so much more than that. Your curriculum vitae makes reference to a vast array of complex cases which you've handled in recent years, including appearing at the Perth Casino Royal Commission, in which you represented one of the regulators as counsel.

You have invested your entire career in the law in public work, which has included appearing as counsel in cutting-edge litigation on behalf of our State, and your colleagues at the State Solicitor's Office speak highly of your capacity for hard work and your formidable ability. Your Honour, I have looked for humorous anecdotes for today, but I've not had any success at all. One of your colleagues said to me you are either perfect in every way or very good at keeping things quiet.

The only thing I managed to find out is that you love a hot chocolate. Your Honour, your colleagues have helped me greatly with their reflections. I can do no better than to quote two of them in full so that you have a lasting record of how fondly you're thought of at your office. Craig Bydder SC, Deputy State Solicitor from the State Solicitor's Office, said:

Before her Honour's appointment to the Court, Justice Seaward served as an Acting Deputy State Solicitor, leading the public and general litigation section of the State Solicitor's Office. That section deals with a large number and wide variety of litigation matters, including more than its share of the unusual, the unexpected and the urgent. No doubt, Justice Seaward's experience in that role, together with her long experience as solicitor and counsel, will see her Honour well prepared to contribute to the work of the Court.

There is another aspect of Justice Seaward's character which is at least as important as her Honour's exceptional legal ability. Throughout her time at the State Solicitor's Office, Justice Seaward has shown herself to be humane in the best sense of the word, always ready to make time for others, to genuinely listen to them and to respond to their concerns compassionately, helpfully and, where appropriate, decisively.

Justice Seaward has invariably displayed that humanity to all, whatever their position or the nature of their concern. Counsel and parties before the Court, as well as her Honour's colleagues on the bench and the administrators of justice, will now enjoy the benefit of Justice Seaward's humane approach as well as her legal acumen.

Kirsten Chivers, the Acting Deputy State Solicitor, very kindly provided me with her reflections:

Justice Seaward played many roles in the State Solicitor's Office over the years, having served a number of its practice areas and having built a skillset unparalleled in its breadth as a consequence. At times, she has been counsel, solicitor, advisor, commercial drafter, independent reviewer and inquirer. She has approached each of these roles with the same dedication and commitment, somehow managing to juggle everything and always remaining committed to the cause of serving the community of Western Australia.

Despite her Honour's incredible expertise and dedication as a lawyer, her greatest contribution to the State Solicitor's Office perhaps lies not in those legal skills, but rather in the contribution made in her role as a mentor and friend to all. In a profession where time is a very precious commodity, Justice Seaward gave so generously of her own time, always there to lend a hand, offer support or just listen when needed.

She was in equal parts compassionate and practical, a trusted sounding board and someone who could help make even the most seemingly insurmountable problem bearable.

And I must also thank Tania Jeyamohan of the District Court for kindly speaking to me about your Honour. It's clear that you are greatly missed by your colleagues at the State Solicitor's Office, where you were spoken of with great

admiration. Your colleagues believe it is a testament to you that you were appointed to this Court so soon after your appointment of silk. And the last word goes to you, your Honour.

You said that you are greatly looking forward to the change from making the arguments to hearing the arguments. You said it's daunting; it's a challenge. But I think we can see how much your Honour will thrive on that challenge. Your Honour, I must say that you have distinguished yourself not only as an educated and critical thinker leading the way for many, but, importantly, also as a compassionate person. It must be clear to all that you have answered your calling in life.

And on behalf of the Legal profession of Western Australia and the Law Society, we warmly congratulate you on your appointment and wish your Honour all the very best in this new role, in serving the community and the administration of justice, may it please the Court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Ms Wilkinson. Mr Dharmananda.

DHARMANANDA, MR: May it please the Court. May I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people who form part of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders. It is my honour and privilege to say a few words on behalf of the WA Bar at this welcome for the Honourable Justice Fiona Seaward. As has been said more than once today, your Honour is amply qualified to serve as a judge of this Court.

You have more than 20 years' experience working at the State Solicitor's Office. You have a Bachelor of Laws with first class honours and a Master of Laws with merit. In 1994, you graduated dux - as dux of your class at the Harvey Agricultural Senior High School. I understand you did extremely well in history, which you studied by listening to lessons on the radio provided by the then School of the Air program.

You were top of that class. There's no doubting your Honour's innate ability. Your Honour has appeared in numerous cases, representing the State, the Attorney General, ministers and state instrumentalities, very often against leading Senior Counsel. It would appear that your Honour has a particular fascination for the complexities involved in construing the Mining Act 1978. Recently in *Blue Ribbon Mines v Roy Hill Infrastructure*, the court held, based on your argument, that there is no power to

grant an exploration licence over a block by excising the area of a miscellaneous licence already granted over that part - over part of that block.

The intricacies of the Mining Act never ceased to amaze, at least, perhaps, to those who are interested in such things. Your Honour took silk only a few months ago, on 28 October 2022. Your Honour attended the new silks bow ceremony before the High Court on 6 February 2023. And on 21 February 2023, your appointment to this Court was announced. That is quite an achievement in fast motion. It's a pity your Honour was unable to attend the ceremonial sitting of the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia on 14 March 2023 to announce your appointment as Senior Counsel.

May I say the ceremony went well. Chief Justice Allsop nearly mistook Tim Hammond SC for Mr Chris Bydder SC, who was also unable to attend. For his announcement, Mr Eric Heenan SC was given special words to make clear that although he ranks after your Honour as Senior Counsel, you had already taken appointment as a judge of this Court. It was a fun occasion, with all players reading their lines with relative ease.

I digress. The Honourable William Gummow AC KC was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1986 and was appointed a judge of the Federal Court on 24 November 1986. Despite my extensive research, including with the help of a Sydney junior, I have been unable to determine exactly when in 1986 the Honourable William Gummow was appointed silk; regardless, your Honour's rapid appointment as a judge is comparable to Justice Gummow's appointment.

Given your Honour's ability, there is little doubt your Honour will make an equally significant contribution to the administration of justice, may I say, with great respect. From all reports, your Honour is described as incredibly composed, extremely able, supremely organised, with a calm demeanour. It is said you were often super busy working all hours at the State Solicitor's Office. There was not much time for frivolity.

But your Honour has a dry sense of humour and willing always to chat and assist junior lawyers. Your kind and patient manner is singled out. Your Honour is much respected for your contribution to the senior management team at the State Solicitor's Office. Your Honour takes a collaborative approach. Your Honour took that approach during the Perth Casino Royal Commission, representing your

client but always willing to work with opposing counsel to meet the ends of justice.

Your Honour has a breadth of knowledge and experience, including in constitutional law, administrative law, land compensation and in general civil litigation. I understand your Honour did not have much direct experience with company law at the Crown, but, apparently, that has now changed. The first contested case your Honour heard earlier this month was a case involving the Corporations Act 2001. I'm reliably told your Honour diligently started at page 1 of the Corporations Act in masking the material and preparing to hear the case.

As Professor Baker explains in *An Introduction to English Legal History*, equity was moving toward the recognition of joint-stock companies with limited liability in the early 19th century, in fact, before the statutory foundation of company law in 1844 and 1856. And as Yuval Harari explains in *Sapiens*, the limited liability company is a particular genre of legal fictions, the idea behind which is among humanity's most ingenious inventions.

Your Honour's knowledge of equity and your highly-honed skills in statutory interpretation will make company law and the masque of this legal fiction a walk in the park, may I respectfully say. On behalf of the WA Bar, may I again congratulate your Honour and look forward to your contribution to the administration of timely justice. May it please the Court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Mr Dharmananda. Justice Seaward.

SEAWARD J: Thank you. Chief Justice, current and past members of the Court, members of other courts, Mr Attorney, Ms Wilkinson, Mr Dharmananda, members of the legal profession, my family and friends, thank you to all of you for taking the time to attend this afternoon. An occasion such as this is somewhat overwhelming, but it is made much easier by seeing so many friendly faces in the room. I first wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation.

I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. To those at the bar table who have spoken today, thank you for your very kind words. For the benefit of my family and friends, on occasions such as this, all those addressing the Court are required to speak about the new justice in terms that exaggerate and embellish. That brief

has been met today. Mr Attorney, I am humbled and most grateful for the trust and confidence you and the government have placed in me by appointing me as a justice of this Honourable Court.

I have spent my entire legal career working in the public service and I'm looking forward to the next chapter of that career. Thank you also to Ms Wilkinson and Mr Dharmananda for your kind words on behalf of the Law Society of Western Australia and the Western Australian Bar Association. Both organisations serve a vital role in the operation of the legal system in Western Australia. I was proud to be a member of the Law Society. Whilst I was not a member of the Independent Bar due to my employment, I acknowledge the significant and important work undertaken by the Bar Association, especially as the Independent Bar has grown in size and diversity.

I would like to thank the Chief Justice and all members and staff of the Court for welcoming me so warmly. I have been inundated with advice, tips, and offers of assistance on my commencement. I am most grateful for this. I am especially grateful for the generous welcome given to me by the female members of the Court. My appointment follows the retirement of Justice Allanson, and I'm most pleased that he is able to be here today. Thank you also to those members of other courts and members of the profession who have sent me congratulatory messages upon my appointment. I have been most touched by each of these and have done my very best to respond to them all.

As has been mentioned, I commenced my legal career as an article clerk with the then Crown Solicitor's Office of Western Australia, today the State Solicitor's Office. I commenced, thinking I would work there for three or four years before moving to the private sector. However, I simply never left. Inevitably, my appointment has led me to reflect on my time at the Office. The Crown Solicitor's Office was established in December 1839, although it was not really much of an office. The first Crown Solicitor, William John Lawrence, was a sole appointment and he did not have any other staff.

He also wasn't given an actual office. Rather, he was required to continue working out of his private office. He also wasn't originally given a salary but was instead allowed to continue with private practice. In 1842, the salary of the Crown Solicitor was set at the princely sum of £200. However, a mere two years later, a committee decided that this amount was simply too high and

recommended it be cut in half to only £100. The Office has changed considerably in the last 180-odd years.

Today, it consists of approximately 175 lawyers and 80 support staff. The current Acting State Solicitor, Ms Angela Komninos, is the first woman to hold that role. I am also reliably informed that today the State Solicitor receives a salary. The Office serves a vital role in the legal system of Western Australia, providing frank, fearless, independent, and high quality legal advice and representation to the government of Western Australia, its agencies and instrumentalities.

The Office provided an excellent and grounding for a junior lawyer. From the moment I started, I simply felt like I belonged. The combination of the exceptionally wide variety of work, the element of public service, and the notion of striving at all times to achieve not only the legally correct answer, but an answer that is in the public interest, was incredibly satisfying. As a junior lawyer who also wished to appear as counsel in court, the opportunities for counsel work, whether as junior counsel or in your own right, were also a dream come true.

However, as with all workplaces, it is the people who make all the difference and turn what might, on paper, appear to be a good place to work into an excellent place to work. During my career, I have been fortunate enough to work with and learn from a number of truly excellent lawyers. I've already thanked many of you privately and individually, but I would be remiss not to extend my thanks today to some particular individuals. I've worked with five Crown or State Solicitors over the past 20 years, Peter Panegyres AM, the Honourable Timothy Sharp, Paul D. Evans, his Honour Judge Egan, and Angela Komninos. Thank you for the support and opportunities you have each given to me over the years.

One of the advantages for a public lawyer working at the State Solicitor's Office is the opportunity to work with a Solicitor General on constitutional matters, many of them significant cases which re-state or clarify important principles of constitutional law in Australia. I was privileged during my time at the State Solicitor's Office to work with a number of Solicitors General. My first opportunity was generously granted to me by Justice Mitchell, then the Acting Solicitor General, in *Williams v The Commonwealth*, the first school chaplains case.

I will never forget my first appearance in the High Court in that case which concerned the scope of the

Commonwealth's executive power. As the first day of the hearing progressed, it became clear that the High Court held a very different view on the scope of that power than the parties and intervenors may have thought. Watching such experienced and learned counsel scramble to adjust to the new paradigm was an excellent learning experience for a junior lawyer. Following that case, I worked with three other Solicitors General, Grant Donaldson SC, the Chief Justice, and the current Solicitor General, Joshua Thomson SC. Thank you to each of you for the opportunities and support you gave me.

I also wish to extend my thanks to some of the senior lawyers I have worked with at the office, Carolyn Thatcher SC, Alan Sefton SC, Craig Bydder SC, John Young, Ilse Petersen, Michele Payne, Tania Jeyamohan, and Kirsten Chivers. Thank you for your friendship, support, and mentorship, and the opportunities to work with you and learn from each of you. One of the greatest privileges of being a lawyer in the State Solicitor's Office is the opportunity to work with various junior lawyers.

I've been incredibly well-supported over many a trial, hearing, or appeal by some of the best junior lawyers in Perth. There are simply too many of you to name, but please know that you have made me look good and organised at every turn. Never forget that the work you do is vitally important to the administration of justice in this State. I wish you all the best in your future legal careers, whether they be at the State Solicitor's Office or elsewhere. And I'm incredibly thankful that I was never required to compete against any of you for a law graduate position.

Thank you also to the incredible support staff at the State Solicitor's Office who have assisted me. I especially wish to thank Anna Courtman for her invaluable support for the public and general litigation team.

Due to my father's work, my childhood was spent in country Western Australia. My father's work necessitated a number of different moves throughout Western Australia for our family, Kununurra, Wongan Hills, Esperance, and Harvey. As a result, prior to university, my education was entirely a product of the Western Australian public country schools and I never felt that I wanted for anything.

I was fortunate enough to have a series of excellent teachers combined with the benefits of a country upbringing. Even when there were insufficient students in my high school for a history class in year 11 and 12, arrangements were made for me to study history by distance

education. Upon completing my high school education, I moved to Perth to attend the University of Western Australia where I studied law and commerce. Moving from the country, I knew very few people in Perth and none in law school. I lived at St George's College at UWA for three years and that was one of the best decisions we made.

I made a friends with a group of simply wonderful women. Despite the various paths and directions our lives have taken us, we still remain in touch and I'm most happy to see Sarah and Bronwyn here today. It is, of course, only with the benefit of hindsight that you realise the full extent of the role played by your parents in your development and that you appreciate the sacrifices they made as you grew up to help you succeed in your chosen field and in life in general.

My father, Richard, passed away in 2017. He spent his entire working life a as a public servant, working for either the CSIRO or in the various incarnations of the State Department of Agriculture. My mother, Beverley, and grandmother, Hazel, were also teachers at various points in their careers. Against this background, it is perhaps not surprising that I, too, ended up in the public service. My mother Beverley, as the mother of four children, spent a considerable amount of time in the car, driving all four of us to our various after school activities, ensuring we had every opportunity available to us, whether that be sporting activities, ballet, or music lessons, debating competitions, or other social activities.

My mother then patiently sat with me as we deciphered the various forms and procedures necessary for year 12 exams and applications for university. My mother then assisted me navigate the move to Perth to attend university. That assistance did not end once I left home. Beverley patiently proofread my law honours thesis, sent by fax between our houses, and assisted me as I applied for articles positions. In short, she has been there at all significant moments in my life. Now that I and some of my siblings have children of our own, she's doing the same for our children. Thank you, Beverley, for everything you do for us.

My father did not attend university but always encouraged me in my aspirations. He patiently attempted to assist me with my high school maths homework. My lack of success in that field is not for his want of trying. My father could also be called on to assist in times of crisis. I remember one occasion in first year university when I was in the semi-finals of the first year mooting

competition. I was staying at St George's College and my father was in Perth at the time, and he came to watch.

We walked over to law school together but it was only when we arrived that I realised I had left my notes back in the college room. We only had 15 minutes before the moot started. My father sprinted back to the college and collected my notes for me and arrived back just in time, red-faced and puffing. Thankfully, his efforts were not wasted and I made it through to the finals. Whilst he cannot be here today, I'm grateful that his siblings, Malcom, Susan, and John, and their partners are here today in his stead.

I am the eldest of four children. You may think that meant I was in charge, but that was not how our house worked. Having three siblings is an excellent grounding for life as a lawyer. It encourages the development of persuasive oral submissions skills and mediation skills all at the same time. I'm most pleased that my sister Kate is able to be here today and my sister Clare and brother Timothy are hopefully watching today's proceedings via a live link to their homes in the United Kingdom. I also wish to acknowledge my parents-in-law Margaret and Norman. Thank you very much for welcoming me into your family so warmly.

And finally, I turn to my immediate family. As many of you know, our house was, until recently, a two silk household. Terry is my rock and my confidant. He is the smartest person and lawyer I know. Terry is also the chef of the household. This has the distinct advantage of ensuring that we don't starve, or worse, have to regularly eat my cooking. Our life together has always been a partnership where we managed the juggle together. In the past, when inevitable bump has come along, we have worked through the issue together as a team and managed.

My appointment may have added a few extra elements to that juggle, but Terry has been my biggest supporter and I know that we can continue to navigate our lives together as a team. And finally, to our sons, Henry and Lachlan. Thank you very much for coming today and for sitting through yet another ceremony so beautifully. Your dad and I love you both very much. You are my proudest achievement and put everything in my life into perspective. I am so proud to be your mum and I'm looking forward to all the exciting adventures we will have together.

Thank you once again to all of you who have attended this afternoon. I will do my best to uphold my oath and to

contribute to the important work of this Honourable Court.
Thank you.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, your Honour. And it's only fitting that I conclude by observing that if Justice Seaward devotes to her judicial duties even half of the attention to detail and diligence that Lachlan has shown for his colouring in, the Court is in good hands. Court will adjourn.

AT 4.58 PM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY

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