




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 15 October 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Judicial Appointments

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (9.50 am): Mr Speaker, confidence in the expertise, independence and impartiality of the judiciary is essential to the proper functioning of government in Queensland. This government believes that the public will only fully share that confidence if the process for the selection and appointment of members of the judiciary can be seen to be transparent and consultative. Accordingly, this government has committed to review the current processes for the appointment of judicial officers in Queensland and to consult extensively with stakeholders in the development of a protocol as to how judicial appointments ought to be made.

I am pleased to announce that a discussion paper will be released for public consultation today to stimulate discussion and debate around the regime governing the appointment of judicial officers in Queensland. This discussion paper will be published on the government's Get Involved website at www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au. The paper outlines the current regime for judicial appointments to the Supreme, District and Magistrates courts in Queensland and sets out the legislation, policies and procedures for judicial appointments in other Australian jurisdictions as well as in England and Wales.

The discussion paper asks whether there should be a formal and publicly available procedure for judicial appointments in Queensland, the form such a policy or procedure should take and the elements of that procedure. The discussion paper also seeks the views of the public and stakeholders on the skills, attributes and qualities, both personal and professional, required of a judicial officer, strategies that could be adopted for identifying suitable candidates for appointment and the best process for assessing judicial candidates.

In making this announcement I would like to acknowledge and thank the people who I consulted with in relation to a number of recent appointments. Their assistance and advice was greatly appreciated and formed a central part of the process of making those appointments. I also thank them for the genuine spirit with which the consultation occurred and the mutual respect of confidentiality in that process. In particular I note that in consulting as to the appointment of the new Chief Justice, the Hon. Catherine Holmes, I consulted broadly across the profession. Those opposite were involved in that consultation, and I thank them for their input.

This review is an important step towards a more transparent and accountable judicial appointments framework for this state, and I encourage interested members of the public and stakeholders, including the opposition, to become involved and to provide feedback on the issues and questions raised.