




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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Byrne, Justice J, AO

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.38 pm): Last week I was privileged to attend and speak at a valedictory ceremony for the honourable Justice John Byrne. Over the course of his long career Justice Byrne has provided distinguished service to Queensland as a member of the legal profession and of the judiciary.

Justice Byrne took silk after only nine years at the bar, before joining the Supreme Court bench in 1989. His Honour never shied from his responsibilities on the trial division of the Supreme Court, presiding over novel and notorious cases. Since 2007, His Honour has managed the trial division of the Supreme Court as Senior Judge Administrator. His legal intellect and leadership to the court have been paramount in guiding the court through the challenges of these times.

The ceremony was a fitting farewell for a great servant of the Queensland legal profession. Justice Byrne's achievements, outside of arguing and applying the law, are manifold. At various times, His Honour served as a member or leader of bodies as diverse as the Litigation Reform Commission, the Supreme Court Library and Rules Committees, the Queensland and Australian Councils of Social Services, the National Judicial College and the Australian Institution of Judicial Administration. He contributed to legal education at three great Queensland tertiary institutions—Griffith University, Bond University and his alma mater the University of Queensland. His Honour was a member of the Army Reserve for over 19 years, finishing with a rank of Lieutenant Colonel and a reserve force decoration. Fittingly, His Honour was awarded the Order of Australia in 2013.

I personally thank Justice Byrne for his advice and reflections while I have been in this role. His insights have been appreciated. I also express my gratitude for His Honour's advance advice of his retirement to allow for a smooth transition within the court. On behalf of the Queensland government and all members of this House, it is my pleasure to wish Justice Byrne well in all future endeavours.