

Media Release

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP

Attorney-General

Minister for the Coordination of Justice and Community Safety – COVID-19

Minister for Workplace Safety



Wednesday, 10 June 2020

NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE COUNTY AND CORONERS COURTS

The Victorian Government has today announced the appointment of Sarah Leighfield, David Purcell, Fiona Todd and My Anh Tran to the County Court, and the reappointment of Coroner John Olle to the Coroners Court.

Sarah Leighfield has been a magistrate since 2016. She spent three years servicing the Loddon Mallee Region, leading the sexual offences and committal mention lists, and is currently based at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court, predominantly sitting on crime and family violence matters.

Ms Leighfield holds a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Melbourne and prior to becoming a magistrate was a barrister for 12 years.

David Purcell SC has over 25 years' experience in personal injury law, including as a Partner at Stringer Clark in Warrnambool for six years. His practice specialised in workers compensation, negligence and motor vehicle matters.

Mr Purcell was first admitted to practice in 1993, joined the Victorian Bar in 2003 and was appointed as Senior Counsel in 2017. He holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts from Monash University.

Fiona Todd has extensive experience as a criminal lawyer, including as a Senior Associate with Robert Stary Lawyers and as a barrister for nearly 10 years. Ms Todd regularly appears in the Supreme and County Court and the Court of Appeal in criminal matters.

Ms Todd has volunteered with the Fitzroy Legal Service and is a Victoria Legal Aid Criminal Trial preferred barrister. She holds a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) from Deakin University.

My Anh Tran is currently serving as a Judicial Registrar within the Commercial Division of the County Court, having been appointed in May 2015. She signed the Bar Roll in May 2002.

During this time, Ms Tran has overseen the expansion of judicial mediation within the Commercial Division and assisted with the development of a pro bono protocol with the Victorian Bar, the reform of case management procedures and the implementation of electronic court files.

Ms Tran holds a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Melbourne, as well as a Bachelor of Civil Law from the University of Oxford.

Coroner John Olle was appointed to the Coroners Court in 2008 and has worked on many high-profile inquiries that have resulted in historic legislative reform, including the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into End of Life Choices.

Prior to his appointment Coroner Olle practised as a barrister for more than 25 years. He graduated from Monash University with a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Economics.

Ms Leighfield and Mr Purcell will commence their terms from today, Ms Todd will commence her term on 13 July and Ms Tran will commence her term on 9 October. Coroner Olle's reappointment will be effective from 9 September, when his current term expires.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jill Hennessy

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"I congratulate the four new appointees to the County Court and Coroner Olle on his reappointment to the Coroners Court – their diverse and extensive experience will continue to uphold the integrity of our courts."

"Coroner Olle has been dedicated to the Coroners Court for the past 12 years, and I'm pleased that he will continue to share his expertise overseeing important matters and inquiries."