

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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MORE MAGISTRATES TO BOOST VICTORIA'S COURT SYSTEM

The Andrews Labor Government has today announced the appointment of another five new magistrates.

Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes congratulated Lucia Raponi, Helen Spowart, David Langton, Brett Sonnet and Gregory Thomas on their appointments, which will assist in reducing the court backlog.

Magistrate Raponi has been a barrister at the Victorian Bar since 1994, and served as in-house counsel for the then Department of Human Services from 2002 to 2006.

Prior to joining the Bar, she worked as a legal officer at the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office from 1989 to 1994.

Magistrate Spowart was Senior Crown Prosecutor at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in the Northern Territory, and prior to that was special counsel for Victoria Police.

Magistrate Spowart has been admitted to the Supreme Courts of Victoria, Northern Territory and New South Wales and the High Court of Australia and specialised in criminal law.

Magistrate Langton, a barrister, was admitted to the Victorian Bar in 2005 and has extensive experience in family violence law, criminal law, sexual offences and fraud matters. He served as a prosecuting solicitor at the Office of Public Prosecutions from 2000 to 2001.

Magistrate Sonnet, a barrister, was admitted to legal practice in 1991 and worked for the Office of Public Prosecutions from 1998 to 2019, where he held a variety of roles including Associate Crown Prosecutor and Crown Prosecutor. Since 2019, Magistrate Sonnet has been at the Victorian Bar practising in criminal law.

Magistrate Thomas was principal solicitor at Greg Thomas Barrister and Solicitors since 2007. Prior to this, he was a partner and solicitor advocate at Dowling McGregor Thomas from 2003 to 2007 and held several roles at Victoria Legal Aid from 1992 to 2003 as a duty lawyer, in-house counsel and in management at the criminal law division.

Magistrate Raponi will serve in the Children's Court, while Magistrates Spowart, Langton, Sonnet and Thomas will serve in the Magistrates' Court.

The appointments will commence today.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

"I'm excited to welcome five new, distinguished and deserving lawyers as magistrates to the Victorian judicial system, who bring with them extensive experience."

"Having such a variety of skills on the bench is an important part of our work to make justice fairer for and more accessible to Victorians."

"We are continuing to support our courts to catch up follow the disruptions caused by the global pandemic."

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