



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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PUBLIC DEFENDER ASCENDS TO DISTRICT COURT BENCH

Deputy Senior Public Defender Sophia Beckett has been appointed to the bench of the District Court of NSW, Attorney General Mark Speakman announced today.

“Ms Beckett has had a distinguished legal career spanning almost 30 years across all criminal court jurisdictions, appearing in complex criminal trials, appeals, inquests and inquiries including murder, drug importation and sexual assault matters,” Mr Speakman said.

“She acted for the Crown in the trial of Edward Moses Obeid for misconduct in public office and appeared for the defence in one of Australia’s largest terrorism investigations, arising from Operation Pendennis, which uncovered jihadist cells in Melbourne and Sydney.

“During her time at the Legal Aid Commission of NSW, the Western Aboriginal Legal Service and at the NSW Bar, Ms Beckett has championed equal access to the law.”

Ms Beckett was admitted as a NSW solicitor in 1990 and was called to the Bar in 2007. She was a senior policy officer at the then Department of Attorney General between 2004 and 2005 advising on criminal law and drafting legislation.

Ms Beckett returned to the Legal Aid Commission as senior solicitor in the Indictable Appeals Unit.

She spent almost a decade as a barrister at Forbes Chambers before joining the Public Defenders.

Ms Beckett is a member of a number of professional committees, including the NSW Bar Association’s Criminal Law Committee, representing the Association on the Early Appropriate Guilty Plea reforms.

“I congratulate Ms Beckett on her appointment and wish her every success in the next stage of what has been an impressive legal career,” Mr Speakman said.

Ms Beckett will be sworn into her new position in a ceremony on 30 September.