



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
OFFICE OF THE CORONER

MEDIA RELEASE

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Leading QC appointed as Counsel Assisting the Coroner's Bushfire Inquiry

ACT Coroner, Magistrate Maria Doogan, has announced the appointment of a leading barrister, Mr Lex Lasry QC, as Counsel Assisting the Coronial Inquiry into the January, 2003 Bushfire and the Inquests into the deaths associated with the fires.

“Mr Lasry is an eminent and well-respected barrister who has vast experience in the law and, in particular, in the area of public enquiries. I was pleased to approve his nomination by the Director of Public Prosecutions and look forward to working closely with him during the course of my Inquiry”, Coroner Doogan said.

Mr Lasry has 30 years legal experience, being first admitted to practice in 1973. He was subsequently appointed as Queens Counsel in 1990. He has well established practices in Melbourne and Canberra, and has also practiced in New South Wales and Queensland.

His extensive experience in enquiries includes :

- Royal Commissioner in Victoria – Matters affecting the Metropolitan Ambulance Service (2000-2001);
- Counsel assisting the Coroner in major Inquests in Victoria (1990-1991);
- Counsel assisting the Australian Companies & Securities Commission inquiry into the Rothwells Merchant Bank (1988)
- Counsel assisting the National Crime Authority (1984);
- Junior counsel assisting the Royal Commissioner enquiring into the activities of the Federated Ship Painters and Dockers Union (1983-1984); &
- Prosecution and defence work in major criminal trials

“The appointment of Mr Lasry completes the Coroner's investigation team, and means that my Inquiry can now move forward towards completing the investigative stage, and prepare for the commencement of the hearing stage”, Magistrate Doogan said.

“He brings to the Coronial Bushfire Inquiry the depth of knowledge, skills and experience which will be needed to ensure that the work of the Inquiry is completed in a comprehensive and timely manner”, she said.

Magistrate Doogan & Mr Lasry will not be available for media interview.

Further information can be obtained from the ACT Courts Website : www.courts.act.gov.au

ACT CORONER'S BUSHFIRE INQUIRY

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