

SHORT BIOGRAPHY – JAMES McLEOD

1. Personal

Name: James Stewart McLeod

Chambers Address: P G Hely Chambers

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(near corner King Street and Elizabeth Street)

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2. Education

1996: Dux of Merewether High School.

2000: B Economics (Honours): University of Newcastle.

2001: Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours): University of Newcastle

(High distinction in Honours thesis, and prizes and/or awards in contract law, equity law, and torts).

Diploma of Legal Practice (awarded on completion of PLT requirements).

3. Career

2000-2001: Summer Clerk: Mallesons Stephen Jaques (now King & Wood Mallesons) (**Mallesons**).

2001: Law Clerk at Mallesons.

February 2002: Admission as a solicitor.

2002-2003: Associate to Justice Richard Conti QC, Federal Court of Australia.

2003-2004: Solicitor, Mallesons: in the litigation teams of then partner (and now Supreme Court Judge) Ashley Black, and Peter Stockdale (partner and now Global Head of Risk at Mallesons).

February 2004 Admitted to the Bar and commenced practising as a barrister.

2004-2005 First year at the Bar: 11th Floor Wentworth/Selborne Chambers – tutors were Ian Pike SC (now a Supreme Court Judge) and Alec Leopold SC.

May 2005 to March 2006 Barrister, 6th Floor Selborne/Wentworth Chambers

April 2006 to December 2009 Barrister, 7th Floor Selborne Chambers

1 January 2010 to June 2019 Barrister, 53 Martin Place Chambers

July 2019 – May 2023 Barrister, Alinea Chambers

4. Work as a barrister

I am a personable, practical and very experienced barrister who for around 21 years has been briefed to advise and appear in a diverse range of litigation. I appear in trials and on appeals, and accept briefs throughout Australia from law firms, and sometimes on a direct access basis (for example from in-house lawyers, tertiary academic institutions, or sporting organisations).

I provide persuasive advocacy and a thoughtful approach to achieving real outcomes in legal disputes. I bring a determined focus and work ethic to cases, and a genuine empathy and understanding for my clients.

I am adept at advising in relation to legal disputes (and the prospects of them) in conference, or in writing, and regard it as an important part of my role as a barrister to be able to do that in a relatable and clear way.

I typically appear unled in matters, often against senior counsel.

I was admitted to the Bar in February 2004 after two years practising as a solicitor, the first working as the Associate to the then Federal Court judge (and former leading barrister) Justice Richard Conti QC.

After basing myself at other leading Sydney chambers, since May 2023 I have been a floor member at P G Hely Chambers, located in Elizabeth Street in Sydney's CBD.

My work involves appearance/advocacy and advisory work across most civil litigious areas, but predominantly in one or more of the following four areas:

- **commercial disputes** - including contractual disputes and ACL matters;
- **employment related disputes** - including end of employment/termination/dismissal disputes, adverse action and post-employment restraint matters; this work includes representing both employers (including insured employers) and employees;
- **sports law** – including appearance work at sports and racing tribunals in sporting disciplinary and/or anti-doping matters, and providing advisory and strategic advice to elite sports people and sporting organisations (including Clubs and governing bodies);
- **inquests and inquiries** – including appearing at public commissions of inquiry and coronial inquests, and advisory work in connection with those forums.

Other areas of my legal work include **professional disciplinary/conduct** matters, **discrimination law** (including involving allegations of racial, disability, and sex-based discrimination), **defamation law** and advice work in respect of **reputational risk, property** related disputes, and **corporations law** work.

During my career at the Bar I have appeared in the High Court, Federal Court, NSW Court of Appeal, NSW Supreme Court (Equity and Common Law Divisions), Land and Environment Court, District and Local Courts. I have also appeared often in the Fair Work Commission, and in the NCAT (and CTTT), ADT, NSW IRC, and at various sports and racing tribunals.

I am a believer in mediation, and am a skilled advocate at mediations. I am a trained and formerly accredited (NMAS) mediator.

In sports law, I have appeared in leading sporting and/or racing tribunals dating back to 2004, including: the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the National Rugby League (**NRL**) Judiciary, in disciplinary forums of Football Australia (then **FFA**), in relation to anti-doping provisions of the WADA Code, and at the Racing Appeals Tribunal (the peak appeal body for all thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing appeals in NSW). In recent years I have appeared several times a year at the NRL Judiciary, including as the counsel of choice for the Sydney Roosters and New

Zealand Warriors, and in November 2024 appeared in a high profile disciplinary matter within the tribunal process of the National Basketball League (**NBL**), representing the Adelaide 36ers and two of its elite players.

During the period 2022 to 2025 examples of my appearance/advocacy work include: appearing unled to provide separate representation to the then second in charge of legal at The Star Entertainment Group in the first public inquiry in connection with The Star presided over by Adam Bell SC; appearing unled in a five day commercial dispute hearing in the Supreme Court involving issues of contract and ACL law in the setting of the recycling industry; appearing unled in a three day commercial dispute hearing in the Federal Court; appearing for players and Clubs at the NRL Judiciary.

The evolution of the law and the profession is important to me, and I have presented papers to lawyers, including multiples times as a presenter at the NSW State Legal Conference, and to legal teams within a law firm and also in-house legal environment.

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