



## FEDERAL MAGISTRATES COURT OF AUSTRALIA

### **From the Bar to the Bench, Ms Josephine Willis, welcomed to the Federal Magistrates Court of Australia**

**16 February 2009**

Cairns-based Barrister, Ms Josephine Willis, will be officially welcomed as the newest Federal Magistrate today, Monday 16 February 2009, at the Supreme Court in Cairns.

Chief Federal Magistrate John Pascoe AO will host a ceremonial sitting of the Court to officially welcome Ms Willis. Federal Magistrates Coker, Coates and Demack, together with Justice Benjamin from the Family Court, will also be attending the event.

“We are delighted with the new appointment and enthusiastically welcome Ms Willis to the Court,” Chief Federal Magistrate Pascoe said.

“It is especially pleasing to have an appointment such as Ms Willis who is well known in the community and is enormously respected by the Far North Queensland legal fraternity.”

While the Federal Magistrates Court predominantly deals with family law cases, the Court has a wide-ranging jurisdiction which also includes (but is not limited to) the areas of human rights, bankruptcy, workplace relations and migration.

Federal Magistrate Willis will not only service litigants in Cairns, she will service the wider region by conducting regular circuits in Mackay and Townsville.

“I feel extremely privileged and proud to have been appointed a Federal Magistrate,” Ms Willis said.

“I am very pleased that the position has been filled by a local member of the North Queensland legal community. I will work extremely hard to ensure that Far North Queensland receives exceptional service from the Federal Magistrates Court of Australia,” she added.

Ms Willis was admitted as a Barrister in the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1995 and has lived in Cairns for about 17 years. Her areas of specialty are family law, de facto property, child protection and domestic violence. Ms Willis was a member of the Bar Association of Queensland and has served as a regional member of that association’s council. She has been a member of the Law Council of Australia, the Family Law Practitioners Association in Brisbane, the Family Law Practitioners Group in Cairns, Far North Queensland Barristers Association Inc and was a member of the Family Court Case Management Committee in North Queensland from 2004 to 2007.

Ms Willis replaces Federal Magistrate Stephen Coates who is now based in Brisbane.

**Media enquiries: Denise Healy, Communication Manager, Phone: 0409 743 695 or 03 8600 4451**