



**SUPREME COURT
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**
Stirling Gardens
Barrack Street
Perth WA 6000

MEDIA ALERT

26 May 2003

Statement by Chief Justice David Malcolm on DPP appearances in Children's Court

Her Honour Judge Kate O'Brien, President of the Children's Court, and I welcome the announcement that the Director of Public Prosecutions will now appear on sentencing matters before the Children's Court.

Successive Presidents of the Children's Court have called for officers of the DPP to appear on all matters before the President, including sentencing. This announcement is long overdue.

Since 1 July 2002, lawyers from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions have prosecuted defended trials before the President. The DPP involvement in the most serious matters in the Children's Court will increase community confidence in the criminal justice system and ensure that trials are conducted by qualified and experienced counsel.

The DPP informed Judge O'Brien last year that representation in sentencing matters before the President would be "phased in" over time. I am pleased that will now take place.

DPP counsel have previously appeared in several matters involving the interpretation of mandatory sentencing legislation. At least two other specific requests made by Judge O'Brien for DPP representation were declined.

It is important to remember that it is a hallmark of our justice system that all of our Courts are open to the public and thereby to public 'scrutiny'. That has always been the case.

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