



# Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General  
Minister for Justice

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**16 January 2012**

### **TWO NEW MAGISTRATES FOR NSW**

The NSW Attorney General, Greg Smith SC, today announced the appointment of barrister Michael Barko and senior solicitor Karen Stafford as magistrates of the Local Court of NSW.

Since they began practising law 23 years ago, Mr Barko and Ms Stafford have primarily appeared in matters before the Local Court.

Mr Barko worked as an associate for a District Court judge from 1987 until 1988 when he began practising as a barrister in criminal and civil law.

He has appeared in the Local Court in almost all of the state's major cities and over a vast portion of country NSW. Mr Barko has also appeared in almost every other jurisdiction in NSW.

Outside of his court practice, Mr Barko has provided legal services to the Sydney Roosters and the Randwick Rugby Club. He has also provided regular legal commentary on a Sydney radio program.

Ms Stafford spent her early years as a solicitor working on civil matters, before joining the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) in 1991.

Over the past 14 years, Ms Stafford has had sole carriage of many serious matters from the time they were referred to the ODPP through to committal hearing, summary hearing or sentence.

Ms Stafford was involved in the prosecution of convicted murderer Arthur "Neddy" Smith from 1994 until 2000.

She has also appeared in matters before the Supreme, District, Local, and Children's Courts.

Mr Barko and Ms Stafford will be sworn in as magistrates on 13 February 2012.

"I congratulate Mr Barko and Ms Stafford on their appointments and look forward to their contributions to the best performing Local Court in Australia," Mr Smith said.