



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations**

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

CENTRAL WEST BARRISTER APPOINTED AS MAGISTRATE

Attorney General John Hatzistergos today announced the appointment of Orange barrister Michael Allen to the bench of the NSW Local Court.

Mr Hatzistergos said Mr Allen had extensive experience as a legal practitioner in country NSW and in Sydney's western suburbs, where he specialised in criminal law.

"Mr Allen has a proven ability to manage a large and varied workload and this attribute will certainly be useful in our busy Local Courts," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"I congratulate him on his appointment as a magistrate and wish him every success in his new role."

In a legal career spanning more than two decades, Mr Allen has worked as a solicitor for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Legal Aid Commission.

"Having sat at either side of the bar table, Mr Allen has an insight into the processes of defending and prosecuting the accused and broad experience as a general practitioner," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"He has appeared as an advocate in mental health hearings and is a former member of the board of Lyndon House, which assists people in the state's central west to overcome drug addictions."

For the past six years, Mr Allen has been practising as a barrister in Orange, representing clients in the Local, District and Supreme Courts as well as the Children's Court.

He holds a Bachelor of Laws from Sydney University and was first placed in the NSW Bar Association's Readers Course in 2002.

Mr Allen's appointment followed a rigorous recruitment process, including an assessment by an independent selection committee.

He will be sworn in as a magistrate at a ceremony in the Downing Centre Courthouse in Sydney on January 27.

His appointment follows the retirement of magistrate John McIntosh.