

Friday, 30 November 2018

Justice defender and Indigenous advocate, Phillip Boulten SC, wins Law Council's President's Award

The Law Council of Australia's President's Award, presented annually to acknowledge and celebrate exceptional achievement in the legal profession, has been presented to barrister Phillip Boulten SC.

Law Council of Australia President, Morry Bailes, who presented the award at the Law Council's Annual Gala Dinner last night, said Mr Boulten exemplified the best of the profession.

"Throughout his career, Mr Boulten has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of the rule of law and the administration of justice," Mr Bailes said.

"He has achieved this not only through his work at the Bar, but also his contributions to the work of the Law Council, the Australian Bar Association, and the New South Wales Bar Association, where he served as President.

"His commitment to key tenets of our justice system, like the presumption of innocence, has been an enduring feature of his career. He regularly takes on criminal defence briefs in difficult and unpopular causes, on behalf of individuals accused of serious crimes.

"He also often undertakes large scale pro bono work and has regularly appeared in Royal Commissions and inquiries," Mr Bailes said.

Mr Bailes noted in particular Mr Boulten's long-standing commitment to Indigenous justice.

"After representing the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency at the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory, Mr Boulten volunteered a month of pro bono work acting on behalf of Justice Agency clients across the Northern Territory. This included work on the ground, from bush courts to the Supreme Court," Mr Bailes said.

"Mr Boulten has also consistently and powerfully advocated for ending the national disgrace that is our national rate of Indigenous incarceration.

"As chair of the ABA's Indigenous issues committee, Mr Boulten was instrumental in guiding the ABA's historic recommendation to government to support the inclusion of an Indigenous Voice within the current structure of the Constitution.

"Mr Boulten's commitment to social justice and his ability to interpret and apply the law at the very highest levels make him an invaluable member of the legal profession – and a truly outstanding citizen of our nation," Mr Bailes said.

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