

PRESS RELEASE
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PUBLIC APPOINTMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

CHAIR OF NORTHERN IRELAND LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION

The Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor, Jack Straw MP, has appointed Mr Jim Daniell as chair of the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (the Commission).

Mr Daniell succeeds Sir Anthony Holland whose term as Chair ended on 31 July 2007. Pending the appointment of Sir Anthony's successor, Mr Ronald Spence CB had been appointed interim Chair to the Commission. The Lord Chancellor thanked Mr Spence for his commitment and leadership during this interim period.

Mr Daniell will take up post as chair on 12 November. His appointment is for a period of 3 years. His remuneration will be £436 per day and his commitment to the Commission will be on average 8 days per month.

Mr Daniell was formerly a senior civil servant with extensive experience in justice issues in Northern Ireland. Since his retirement from the Civil Service in 2003 he has worked in senior positions in the Law Society of England and Wales and the Solicitors Regulation Authority as well as undertaking several consultancy assignments. He does not currently hold any other ministerial public appointments.

The appointment has been made in accordance with The Commissioner for Public Appointments Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any declared) to be made public. Mr Daniell has not carried out any political activity in the past five years.

The Lord Chancellor in welcoming Mr Daniell's appointment said "I am delighted to appoint Jim Daniell as the Chair of the Commission. This is an important appointment as the Commission plays a vital role in providing access to justice in Northern Ireland."

Mr Daniell commented “I am delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to work that is so important to sustaining a fair and inclusive justice system. I look forward to working with the other Commissioners and with the staff of the Commission to deliver a quality service to the community.”

ENDS

Notes to editor

The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission

The Commission is a Non-Departmental Public Body established under the provisions of the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and replaced the Legal Aid Department of the Law Society of Northern Ireland on 1 November 2003. The Commission is responsible for administering a fund of £58m for the provision of publicly funded legal services and is accountable to the Lord Chancellor.

The Chair’s role is to:

- provide strong leadership to the Commission in delivering its statutory duties and reporting on its performance
- ensure effective relationships with stakeholders and the Northern Ireland Court Service as its sponsor
- ensure high standards of Corporate Governance and propriety
- represent the views of the Commission to the general public

Mr Daniell is 57 years of age. Over the past three years he has worked in senior positions in the Law society of England and Wales and the Solicitors Regulation Authority where he was Interim Head of Education and Training. He has combined this with consultancy assignments, primarily undertaken in Northern Ireland. Mr Daniell was formerly a senior civil servant with extensive experience in justice issues in Northern Ireland where he was the Director of Criminal Justice in the Northern Ireland Office from 1994 to 2000; during that time he chaired the semi-independent Criminal Justice review under the auspices of the Belfast Agreement. He also worked in the Home Office where he was Director of Crime Reduction from 2000 to 2003.

Ends

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