



Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTORNEYS MARK MILESTONE IN LAW COURTS RENOVATION

A major renovation of the Law Courts Building at Sydney's Queen's Square is nearing completion, with the new-look lobby to be officially opened today.

NSW Attorney General, Greg Smith SC, will join the Federal Attorney General, Nicola Roxon, and judicial heads of jurisdiction at a ceremony to mark the occasion.

"This is a significant day for the Australian justice system, as the Law Courts Building is arguably the nation's most important court facility, accommodating the NSW Supreme Court, the Federal Court and the High Court," Mr Smith said.

"The building is now more secure, more technologically advanced, more energy efficient and more accessible to people with a disability."

Mr Smith said the exterior of the building remained virtually unchanged, but court users would notice substantial differences upon entering the lobby.

"The interior was dark and dated but it is now filled with natural light, creating a more welcoming atmosphere," Mr Smith said.

The renovations of floors occupied by the High Court and the Federal Court have been completed, while shared facilities such as lifts, air conditioning and the cells complex have been upgraded or replaced. There are also airport-style rolling screens for court lists, making it easier to check the location and status of a case

Mr Smith said the renovations of the Supreme Court, which occupies most of the Law Courts Building, were continuing.

"Twenty-four of the Supreme Court's 32 courtrooms have been comprehensively refurbished, while the remaining rooms are being upgraded in stages to minimise disruptions to proceedings," Mr Smith said.

"The improvements to Supreme Court facilities include new audio-visual technology to make it easier to display evidence digitally and to receive testimony from witnesses in remote locations. The courts are also being made more accessible, with people in a wheelchair now able to sit on juries."

The NSW and Federal Governments are jointly funding the renovations of the Law Courts building. The project is due for completion in 2013/14.