

New judicial appointments warmly congratulated by the Law Council of Australia

The Law Council of Australia has warmly congratulated the six judicial appointments to the federal court announced by Attorney-General Senator George Brandis today.

Appointments to Federal Court of Australia:

- Mr Robert Bromwich SC will commence in the Sydney registry on 29 February 2016
- Ms Natalie Charlesworth will commence in the Adelaide registry on 1 March 2016

Appointments to Family Court of Australia:

- Ms Catherine Carew QC will commence in the Brisbane registry on 7 March 2016
- Mr Richard O'Brien will commence in Perth on 8 March 2016

Appointments to Federal Circuit Court of Australia:

- Ms Elizabeth Boyle will commence in the Sydney registry on 29 February 2016
- Ms Jillian Williams will commence in the Melbourne registry on 29 February 2016

Law Council of Australia President Stuart Clark AM warmly congratulated all the new appointments, and gave special thanks to Richard O'Brien, the prominent and long-serving Chair of the Law Council of Australia's Family Law Section.

"Rick O'Brien has been an outstanding contributor to the Family Law Section and, through that, the Law Council of Australia," Mr Clark said.

"He has served as chair of the FLS since 2012 and has been a member of executive since November 2004. In that time he has been instrumental in positioning the FLS, I believe, as the most valuable source of legislative advice in Australia regarding family law.

"His passion for the principles of family law and his tireless advocacy efforts on behalf of the system's function make him an absolute ideal appointment. I have no doubt he will be of excellent service to his state and his country."

Mr Clark also noted the other appointments would offer both depth and breadth of experience to the Bench.

"Catherine Carew is an outstanding appointment to the Family Court of Australia having not only practiced as a family law specialist, but also showing a long-term commitment to the wider legal profession through her membership of a wide range of boards, including the Board of the Family Law Practitioners Association of Queensland, the Australian Institute of Family Law Arbitrators and Mediators, and the Bar Council of the Bar Association of Queensland," Mr Clark said.

“Regarding the Federal Court appointments, both Robert Bromwich and Natalie Charlesworth bring a wealth of experience, with the former having served recently as Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and the latter as an advisor to the South Australian Solicitor-General and, more recently, a barrister of exceptional standing.

“The Federal Circuit Court will be significantly bolstered by the formidable experience of Elizabeth Boyle and Jillian Williams, both of whom have long histories at the highest level in the areas of family law, guardianship, and children’s care and protection.

“These six excellent appointments mark an excellent day for Australia’s court system and for the Australian legal system more broadly.”

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