

## Congratulations to new Commonwealth DPP and Human Rights Commissioners

The Law Council of Australia applauded the appointment of the new Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) as well as the new Disability Commissioner, Age Discrimination Commissioner and Human Rights Commissioner – all announced by the Attorney-General today.

The President of the Law Council, Stuart Clark AM, said that the appointment of Ms Sarah McNaughton SC as the new Commonwealth DPP was an outstanding choice.

“Ms McNaughton’s skills and experience make her an ideal candidate to fill the role of Commonwealth DPP,” Mr Clark said.

“With almost three decades experience as a legal practitioner, and a respected member of the NSW Bar, Ms McNaughton is extremely well placed to serve as the nation’s lead criminal prosecutor.

“We look forward to working with Ms McNaughton throughout her five year tenure in this vital role.

Mr Clark also welcomed the appointment of Mr Alastair McEwin as Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Hon. Dr Kay Patterson as Age Discrimination Commissioner and Mr Edward Santow as Human Rights Commissioner.

“Mr Santow and Mr McEwin are both fellow members of the legal profession,” Mr Clark said.

“As well as a legal academic and Director of the Australian Pro Bono Centre, Mr Santow has also worked at the Australian Law Reform Commission and as a solicitor in private practice. His sharp legal skillset will serve him well as he promotes and protects the human rights of all Australians.”

Mr Clark said that Mr McEwin is a strident advocate for the rights of people with a disability.

“His long and distinguished resume includes being the former manager of the Australian Centre for Disability Law. In this former role he was charged with promoting and protecting the human and legal rights of people with disability and their supporters through legal advocacy,” Mr Clark said.

Mr Clark said that Dr Patterson’s former Parliamentary and Ministerial career made her very well positioned to take on the role of Australia’s Aged Discrimination Commissioner.

“Not only is Dr Patterson the current Commissioner of the National Mental Health Commission, she is also a former Cabinet Minister for Health and Ageing, among other portfolios,” Mr Clark said.

Mr Clark also acknowledged the bi-partisan support for stand-alone Commissioners.

“The Law Council considers that it is important that stand-alone Commissioners are appointed to the Australian Human Rights Commission so that they can adequately perform their statutory functions and address the causes of individual and systemic forms of discrimination,” Mr Clark said.

The Law Council also considers that it is important for the Australian Human Rights Commission to be adequately funded to perform this work.

We congratulate outgoing Commissioner the Hon. Susan Ryan AO, who has performed her dual roles as both Age Discrimination Commissioner and Disability Discrimination Commissioner expertly and to the best of her ability since July 2014. We look forward to working with Commissioners McEwin, Patterson and Santow and the Australian Human Rights Commission.

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