



**SENATOR THE HON GEORGE BRANDIS QC
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS**

MEDIA RELEASE

APPOINTMENTS TO THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY

Today I announce the appointment of a judge of the Federal Court of Australia and four judges to the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.

The Hon Justice James Edelman will fill the vacancy left on the retirement of the Hon Justice Peter Jacobson. He will be based in Brisbane.

Justice Edelman was born on the 9th of January 1974 and graduated from the University of Western Australia with a Bachelor of Economics in 1995 and a Bachelor of Laws with first class honours in 1996, and from Murdoch University with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1997. He was awarded a Rhodes scholarship in 1998 and obtained a Doctor of Philosophy in Law from Magdalen College, Oxford, in 2001. He was appointed a Professor of the Law of Obligations, Oxford, in 2008.

Justice Edelman, who has served as a judge of the Supreme Court of Western Australia since 2011, will be a great asset to the Federal Court bench and I congratulate him on his appointment which will commence on 20 April 2015.

The following barristers have been appointed members of the Federal Circuit Court;

- Mr Alexander (Sandy) Street SC, who will commence in the Sydney registry on 1 January 2015
- Mr Salvatore Vasta, who will commence in the Brisbane registry on 1 January 2015
- Mr Ian Newbrun, who will commence in the Sydney registry on 4 February 2015, and
- Mr Justin Smith SC, who will commence in the Parramatta registry on 27 January 2015.

These appointees bring to the Bench a wealth of experience in their respective fields of expertise. I congratulate them on their appointments.

Mr Street, Mr Newbrun and Mr Vasta will fill the vacancies left by the retirements of Judge Kenneth Raphael and Judge Judith Walker and the resignation of Judge Michael Burnett, respectively. Mr Smith will be appointed to replace Judge David Halligan, who will cease hearing matters in early 2015.

The Federal Circuit Court is the work horse of the federal judicial system, finalising 89,000 applications during 2013-14. The Government is committed to ensuring the Court has the resources it needs to provide access to justice and litigants resolve their disputes with a minimum of delay.

Biographies for the appointees are attached.

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Biographies

The Hon Justice James Edelman

Justice Edelman graduated from the University of Western Australia with a Bachelor of Economics in 1995 and a Bachelor of Laws with first class honours in 1996, and from Murdoch University with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1997. He was awarded a Rhodes scholarship in 1998 and obtained a Doctor of Philosophy in Law from the University of Oxford in 2001.

Justice Edelman was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Western Australia in 1998. He practiced as a barrister at the Chambers of Mr Malcolm McCusker QC in Perth and at the Chambers of Lord Grabiner QC at the English Bar.

Justice Edelman continues to teach as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland and the University of Western Australia. He is also a Conjoint Professor of Law at the University of New South Wales.

Mr Alexander (Sandy) Street SC

Mr Street graduated from the University of Technology, Sydney, in 1982 with a Bachelor of Laws. He was first admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1982 and has subsequently been admitted to practice in the Supreme Courts of the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia. Mr Street was appointed Senior Counsel in New South Wales in 1996 and Queen's Counsel in Western Australia in 1997. He was also admitted to practice in New Zealand in 2001.

With more than 30 years' experience at the Bar, Mr Street has a broad range of subject matter expertise. His areas of practice have included constitutional law, commercial law, corporations law, banking and administrative law, bankruptcy and insolvency, energy and mining, international arbitration, maritime and admiralty law, competition law, military law, insurance and reinsurance, and appellate matters.

Mr Street joined the Royal Australian Navy Reserves as a Lieutenant in 1987 and has been promoted to the rank of Commander. He served as the Deputy Head of the Sydney Naval Legal Panel for two years.

Mr Salvatore Vasta

Mr Vasta graduated from the University of Queensland with a Bachelor of Arts in 1984. He graduated from the Barrister's Admission Board in 1990 and was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Queensland that same year. Mr Vasta was admitted to practice in the High Court of Australia in 2003.

Mr Vasta started his legal career as a legal officer in the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) in 1990. During his career, he has been a Queensland Crown Prosecutor, Senior Crown Prosecutor and is the current Principal Crown Prosecutor at the Queensland ODPP.

Mr Vasta is a Member of the Bar Association of Queensland and is the Deputy Chairman of the Queensland Cricket Board. He is the Vice-President of the International Association of Prosecutors and the President of the Crown Prosecutors Association of Queensland.

Mr Ian Newbrun

Mr Newbrun graduated with a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Sydney in 1979 and a Masters of Laws from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1981. He was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1982.

Mr Newbrun's primary areas of practice are common law actions, will disputes, insurance law, contractual and other commercial disputes and administrative law. He is currently the New South Wales Chairperson of the Federal Medicare Participation Review Committee and a Deputy Chairperson of the New South Wales Health Profession Tribunals since 2012. He has been a panel advisor to the New South Wales Refugee Review Tribunal Legal Advice Scheme. Mr Newbrun is a qualified arbitrator hearing referred actions from the NSW Local and District Courts.

Mr Justin Smith SC

Mr Smith graduated from the University of Sydney in 1991 with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. He was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1992 and was appointed Senior Counsel earlier this year.

Mr Smith's primary areas of practice are administrative law (including migration, customs and taxation law), commercial and equity law, insolvency, succession and regulatory and disciplinary cases as well as varied appellate work. Mr Smith volunteered at Redfern Legal Centre between 1993 and 1997, where he provided free legal advice and took on pro bono matters both at trial and on appeal.