

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Racing



Thursday, 22 January, 2015

## NEW SENIOR COUNSELS MAY CHANGE TO QUEEN'S COUNSEL

Attorney-General Martin Pakula today announced that Victorian barristers appointed Senior Counsel late in 2014 will have the option to be appointed as Queen's Counsel.

The Senior Counsel designation replaced Queen's Counsel as the mark of distinction for senior barristers, or 'silks', in Victoria in 2000.

In April 2014, the Queen's Counsel designation was reintroduced, with barristers holding the rank of Senior Counsel able to apply to be recommended to the Governor for appointment.

The 18 Senior Counsel appointed in November 2014 will be invited to apply to the Attorney-General to be recommended for appointment as Queen's Counsel in coming weeks.

But before any further QCs are appointed, the Attorney-General has asked the Bar to undertake a comprehensive review of the reintroduction of Queen's Counsel.

This review will include broad-ranging consultation with the legal profession and the wider community, and the identification and analysis of any public interest grounds for retaining the designation of QC.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

*"The Senior Counsel designation has been in use in Australia for just over twenty years and is now recognised here and overseas as a mark of professional distinction for legal advocates, and the full equivalent of Queen's Counsel."*

*"Following the reintroduction of Queen's Counsel in Victoria last year, many of the existing Senior Counsel took the opportunity to change their designation. I have determined that the most recent group of Senior Counsel appointees should likewise have the opportunity to be appointed as Queen's Counsel."*

*"As Attorney-General, I have asked the Victorian Bar to undertake a comprehensive review of the reintroduction of Queen's Counsel, including broad-ranging consultation with its members, the legal profession as a whole, and the wider community. This type of review was recently undertaken by the NSW Bar, which ultimately decided not to seek the reintroduction of Queen's Counsel in NSW."*

*"I am mindful that constantly changing the government's position on QCs has the potential to damage an important legal institution. I look forward to receiving advice from the Bar that takes into account the views of as many of its members as possible, and considers the perspective of the whole community."*