



Celebrating 100 years of the Commonwealth Solicitor-General

Monday 24 October 2016, 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Never Stand Still

Law

Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law

In a modern Australian government, the Solicitor-General has been described as 'next to the High Court and God'. But it has not always been thus. In 1910, William Harrison Moore observed that, given that Australian Attorneys-General generally tended to be appointed 'by reference to political rather than professional qualifications', the Commonwealth was sorely in need of a 'permanent official of high legal qualification'. It was not until the Solicitor-General Act 1916 (Cth) was passed that an official office of Solicitor-General was created. The Act was introduced primarily to facilitate the delegation of Attorney-General Billy Hughes' war-time powers to then Secretary of the Department, soon to be the Commonwealth's first Solicitor-General, Sir Robert Garran. It was only decades later with the passage of the Law Officers Act 1964 (Cth) that the Commonwealth Solicitor-General would evolve into what we recognise as the modern office: independent statutory counsel for the Commonwealth.

Please join us for a celebration of 100 years since the passage of the 1916 Act that started it all.



Opening remarks will be given by **Sir Anthony Mason AC KBE QC**, former Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and Commonwealth Solicitor-General, 1964-1969. A panel of the former Commonwealth Solicitors-General will discuss and debate the history, legal position and practice of the office.

- **The Honourable Robert Ellicott QC**, former Judge of the Federal Court of Australia, Commonwealth Attorney-General and Commonwealth Solicitor-General (1969-1973).
- **Dr Gavan Griffith AO QC**, Essex Court Chambers and Owen Dixon Chambers, former Commonwealth Solicitor-General (1984-1997).
- **Dr David Bennett AC QC**, 5 Wentworth Chambers, former Commonwealth Solicitor-General (1998-2008).
- **The Honourable Justice Stephen Gageler**, High Court of Australia, former Commonwealth Solicitor-General (2008-2012).

The panel will be chaired by **Dr Gabrielle Appleby**, Associate Professor UNSW Law, Co-Director of the Judiciary Project, Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law.

DATE: Monday 24 October 2016

TIME: 6.00pm - 7.30pm

VENUE: Banco Court, Level 13, Law Courts Building,
Queens Square, Sydney

Registration is free and available online at
http://100yrs_solicitor-general.eventbrite.com.au.

Registration inquiries should be addressed to Belinda McDonald,
Administrator at the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law on
02 9385 2257 or gtcentre@unsw.edu.au.

