



Mark Speakman
Attorney General and
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOP FEMALE SILK JOINS SUPREME COURT BENCH

Sydney Senior Counsel Kate Williams will take her place on the bench of the Supreme Court as one of the youngest female barristers to be appointed as a NSW Justice.

Attorney General Mark Speakman has announced Ms Williams SC will replace Justice Michael Pembroke, who will be retiring on 12 April this year after ten years at the Supreme Court.

“Ms Williams has had a very successful legal career and brings 22 years of experience to the bench - 19 years of those as a barrister. She has built her reputation primarily in commercial law and equity, as well as commissions of inquiry,” Mr Speakman said.

Ms Williams has appeared in the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry. She also appeared in an open class action concerning firefighting foam also known as PFAS at the Royal Australian Air Force base at Tindal.

Ms Williams has also advised on many legal profession disciplinary matters, including appearing for the Council of the NSW Bar Association. Her first experience working within the legal system was as associate to Justice Kevin Lindgren in the Federal Court of Australia.

In the late nineties, Ms Williams was a solicitor for a top tier law firm before acting for a year as in-house counsel for a major international transport company. Since being called to the Bar in 2001, Ms Williams has practised as a barrister from Eleven Wentworth, one of Australia’s leading chambers in commercial, constitutional and public law.

“I congratulate Ms Williams on her richly deserved appointment and thank Justice Pembroke. His Honour commenced practice at the Bar in 1982 specialising in commercial and equity litigation, was appointed Senior Counsel in 1995 and was elevated to the bench in 2010,” Mr Speakman said.

“Justice Pembroke has gained a reputation for his calm, cheerful composure both on and off the bench. I thank him for his service to NSW.”

While social distancing continues, a formal ceremony to welcome Ms Williams to the Supreme Court Bench will unfortunately, but necessarily have to be delayed. She will take her judicial oath before Chief Justice Tom Bathurst in a private ceremony in chambers on Wednesday, 15 April 2020.

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