

# Appointments to the Federal Court of Australia

---

[Home \(/\)](#) > [Media centre \(/media-centre\)](#) > Appointments to the Federal Court of Australia

The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP

6 December 2024 | Media Release

I am pleased to announce the appointment of 8 new judges to the Federal Court of Australia.

I congratulate the Hon Justice Samuel Vandongen, Mr Cameron Moore SC, Mr Nicholas Owens SC, Professor James Stellios, Ms Houda Younan SC, Ms Elizabeth Bennett SC, Ms Erin Longbottom KC and Ms Amelia Wheatley KC on their appointments.

Four of these appointments are supported by new funding made available through the 2024-25 Budget:

- funding for two appointments was included in reforms to increase capacity to resolve significant backlogs in migration and protection applications
- funding for two appointments was included in a package to support better legal outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including by accelerating the resolution of unresolved native title claims through the expansion of the Federal Court's case management and mediation model.

These appointments follow an open call for expressions of interest across Australia. All applications were considered by an advisory panel comprised of eminent individuals. I thank each new judge for their willingness to serve the people of Australia.

**Hon Justice Samuel Vandongen**

Justice Vandongen has been appointed to the Western Australian Registry and will commence on 17 December 2024.

Justice Vandongen graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1991 with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons), and was admitted as a legal practitioner and Barrister to the Supreme Court of Western Australia in the following year. In 2022 Justice Vandongen was appointed as Justice of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Since 2023 Justice Vandongen has sat as Justice of Appeal on the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Western Australia.

### **Mr Cameron Moore SC**

Mr Moore has been appointed to the New South Wales Registry and will commence on 18 December 2024.

Mr Moore graduated from the University of Queensland with a Bachelor of Arts in 1989 and a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) in 1991. Mr Moore was admitted as a legal practitioner to the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1993. In 1998 Mr Moore was called to the New South Wales Bar and in 2011 was appointed Senior Counsel.

### **Mr Nicholas Owens SC**

Mr Owens has been appointed to the New South Wales Registry and will commence on 18 December 2024.

Mr Owens graduated from the University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Arts in 1997 and then a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) in 1999. In 2001, Mr Owens completed a Master of Laws from the Harvard Law School. In 2003 Mr Owens was admitted as a legal practitioner to the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory. In 2004 Mr Owens was called to the New South Wales Bar and in 2016 was appointed Senior Counsel.

### **Professor James Stellios**

Professor Stellios has been appointed to the New South Wales Registry and will commence on 19 December 2024.

Professor Stellios graduated from the Australian National University with a Bachelor of Economics in 1991, and later a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) in 1995. Professor Stellios was admitted as a legal practitioner to the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory in 1995. In 2013 Professor Stellios was called to the New South Wales Bar.

### **Ms Houda Younan SC**

Ms Younan has been appointed to the New South Wales Registry and will commence on 19 December 2024.

Ms Younan graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) from the University of Sydney in 1998. In 2007 Ms Younan was called to the New South Wales Bar and in 2020 was appointed Senior Counsel.

#### **Ms Elizabeth Bennett SC**

Ms Bennett has been appointed to the Victorian Registry and will commence on 20 December 2024.

Ms Bennett graduated from Monash University in 2003 with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws (Hons). Ms Bennett was admitted as a legal practitioner to the Supreme Court of Victoria in 2005. In 2009 Ms Bennett signed the Bar Roll in Victoria and in 2021 was appointed Senior Counsel.

#### **Ms Erin Longbottom KC**

Ms Longbottom has been appointed to the Queensland Registry and will commence on 20 December 2024.

Ms Longbottom graduated from the University of Queensland in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Law (Hons). In 2003 Ms Longbottom was admitted to practice as a Barrister and in 2019 was appointed Queen's Counsel.

#### **Ms Amelia Wheatley KC**

Ms Wheatley has been appointed to the Queensland Registry and will commence on 6 January 2025.

Ms Wheatley graduated from James Cook University with a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) in 1994 and later obtained a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) from the Queensland University of Technology. Ms Wheatley was admitted as a Solicitor to the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1999. In 2005 Ms Wheatley signed the Bar Roll in Queensland and in 2019 was appointed Queen's Counsel.