



15 October 2021

Media Release: Three judges appointed to the Adelaide registry of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia welcomes the appointment of three judges to the Court's Adelaide registry. These judicial appointments substantially increase the Court's judicial resources and will greatly assist the Court to effectively manage its demanding caseload and provide access to justice in South Australia and nationally.

The Commonwealth Attorney-General, Senator the Hon Michaela Cash today announced the following appointments to the Court's Adelaide registry:

Judge Penelope Kari, elevated from Division 2 to Division 1 of the FCFCOA
Barrister John McGinn, appointed to Division 2 of the FCFCOA
Barrister Caroline Jenkins, appointed to Division 2 of the FCFCOA

Nationally, five new judges have been appointed to Division 1 of the Court and six new judges to Division 2. This provides five additional judges overall, with two additional judges in Division 1 and three additional judges in Division 2. This brings the total number of judges nationally to 104. The Court is anticipating further national appointments in the coming months.

These recent appointments are in addition to the many new judicial registrars, child court experts, indigenous liaison officers and support staff that have been engaged to support the judges and undertake a significant role in the case management of matters in the Court.

The Chief Justice of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, the Hon Will Alstergren, said that he was delighted to be able to welcome the appointment of such esteemed and eminently qualified individuals to the Bench.

"The Court is undergoing a period of significant reform and modernisation. I am pleased to welcome a number of enthusiastic and highly skilled practitioners to the Court who have an incredible depth of knowledge and experience in family law and general federal law, as well as the elevation of several very experienced judges to Division 1 of the Court, and a very experienced Senior Judicial Registrar to Division 2.

"The calibre of these appointments reflects confidence in the Court's reform agenda to deliver widespread improvements to the experience of litigants engaging with the Court, particularly in the area of family law.

"The Court looks forward to welcoming the new judges to assist in delivering a world-leading court system that places the safety of children and vulnerable parties at the heart of the legal process.

"South Australia has the significant benefit of receiving three additional judges than previous years, which now provides a total of nine judges for Federal Circuit and Family Court in South Australia.

“On behalf of the Court, I warmly welcome the new judges who will play a critical part in the Court’s future and serving the people of South Australia.”

Biographical details:

Judge Penelope Kari was appointed to the Federal Circuit Court of Australia in March 2019 in the Adelaide registry, and has now been elevated to Division 1 of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia. Her honour holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws from the University of Adelaide in 2000 and was admitted to the Supreme Court of South Australia in 2001. Justice Kari spent the majority of her early career as a solicitor with David Burrell & Co in Adelaide, specialising in family law and spent a two year period with the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. Her Honour was called to the South Australian Bar in 2011. At the Bar, she practiced in family law and was the Coach and Family Law Unit Coordinator for the South Australian Bar Association Bar Readers Course.

Mr John McGinn graduated from the University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Economics in 1983. He was admitted to practice in 1984 and has practiced as a Barrister since 2006. Judge McGinn joins the Court after a successful career at the South Australian Bar as a barrister in Hugh Barton Chambers, practicing exclusively in the area of family law. He has also presented a number of papers for the Law Society of South Australia in the area of family law, particularly relating to practice and procedure and financial matters. In addition, he has been a facilitator and presenter for the South Australian Bar Association Readers Course in the areas of family law and practice.

Ms Caroline Jenkins signed the Bar Roll in 2003 and has since developed a practice in Family Law, *de facto* property, child support and intervention orders. Judge Jenkins is a Nationally Accredited Mediator and is also an AIFLAM Certified Arbitrator. Judge Jenkins completed her articles at Testart Robinson (now Robinson Gill) before commencing the bar readers course in 2003. Prior to commencing legal practice Caroline was a member of the Victoria Police Force for over 10 years, including several years specialising in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault and the video interviewing of children. As part of her role as a police officer, Judge Jenkins was called upon to educate police in family violence legislation and police policy and has skills in working with clients with mental health issues and those who have been the victims or perpetrators of violence or sexual assault.

Judicial appointments announced by the Commonwealth Attorney-General, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash on 15 October 2021

Brisbane	Division of the Court
Justice Michael Jarrett	Division 1 (elevated from Division 2)
Parramatta	
Justice Grant Riethmuller	Division 1 (elevated from Division 2)
Judge Samantha Murdoch	Division 2 (elevated from Senior Judicial Registrar to Division 2 judge)
Sydney	
Justice Peter Campton	Division 1
Justice Suzanne Christie	Division 1
Judge Sophie Given (Sydney – general federal law)	Division 2
Adelaide	
Justice Penelope Kari	Division 1 (elevated from Division 2)
Judge John McGinn	Division 2
Judge Caroline Jenkins	Division 2
Newcastle	
Judge Vivien Carty	Division 2
Judge Julie Kearney	Division 2

* On 1 September 2021 the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia commenced following the amalgamation of the Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia (Division 2).

Denise Healy

Director – Media & Public Affairs, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

m. 0409 743 695e. denise.healy@fcfcoa.gov.au