



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW CHIEF JUSTICE FOR NSW

Her Excellency the Governor of NSW, the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, has today appointed the current President of the NSW Court of Appeal, the Honourable Justice Andrew Bell, as the next Chief Justice of NSW.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said Justice Bell's renowned intellect and leadership make him a worthy successor to Chief Justice Tom Bathurst AC, who retires from the Supreme Court on 5 March.

"Justice Bell's ascent to the pinnacle of the NSW justice system comes after remarkable academic achievements, including two University Medals from Sydney University, a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford University, first place there in the (post-graduate) Bachelor of Civil Law and a doctorate there," Mr Speakman said.

Before being appointed President of the Court of Appeal in 2019, Justice Bell's career at the Bar spanned almost a quarter of a century. He took silk in 2006.

"His Honour began his legal career with two consecutive terms as a judge's associate, including to then Chief Justice of Australia Sir Anthony Mason AC KBE QC. This early recognition of Justice Bell's ability continued throughout his career," Mr Speakman said.

"Justice Bell was a regular advocate in the High Court, twice led his chambers Eleven Wentworth as chair and was a leader in the NSW Bar Association including as Senior Vice-President. His many scholarly articles and contributions to law texts are also highly regarded."

Mr Speakman paid tribute to Chief Justice Bathurst, who has led the Supreme Court for almost 11 years.

"Chief Justice Bathurst has made an outstanding contribution to the law, both before and during his term in office. His Honour deserves the gratitude of the people of NSW for his work which has in no small way helped to maintain public confidence in the justice system," Mr Speakman said.

"I am confident that despite his impending retirement, Chief Justice Bathurst will make further significant contributions to the law in this state."

Arrangements for the new Chief Justice's commencement will be announced shortly.

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