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ATTORNEY-GENERAL
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

1 April 2022

APPOINTMENTS TO THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA (DIVISION 1)

I am pleased to announce that Dr Jacoba Brasch QC, Judge Alice Carter, Judge Bruce Smith and Judge Alister McNab have been appointed as judges of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA) (Division 1).

Dr Brasch has been appointed to the Sydney Registry to fill the vacancy arising from the retirement of the Hon Justice Ann Ainslie-Wallace, who retired on 31 January 2022. She will commence on 6 April 2022. Dr Brasch was admitted as a barrister in the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2000. She was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2014.

Judge Carter has been appointed to the Melbourne Registry to fill the vacancy arising from the appointment of the Hon Justice Timothy McEvoy to the Federal Court on 3 March 2022. She will commence on 6 April 2022. Judge Carter was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1996. She was appointed to the FCFCOA (Division 2) in 2019.

Judge Smith has been appointed to the Newcastle Registry to fill the vacancy arising from the retirement of the Hon Justice Garry Watts AM on 30 March 2022. He will commence on 6 April 2022. Judge Smith was admitted as a solicitor in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1993. He was appointed to the FCFCOA (Division 2) in 2018.

Judge McNab has been appointed to the Melbourne Registry to replace the Hon Justice Kirsty Macmillan, following her resignation on 31 March 2022. He will commence on 6 April 2022. Judge McNab was admitted as a barrister and a solicitor in the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1988. He was appointed to the FCFCOA (Division 2) in 2016.

On behalf of the Australian Government, I congratulate Dr Brasch, Judge Carter, Judge Smith and Judge McNab on their appointments and thank them for their willingness to serve the people of Australia as judges of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1).

DR JACOBA BRASCH QC

Dr Brasch graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1989 and with a Masters of Public Administration in 1994 both from the University of Queensland. Dr Brasch later obtained a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) from the Queensland University in Technology in 1998, a Master of Laws (Hons) from New York University (as a Fulbright Scholar) in 2000, and obtained a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) from the University of New South Wales in 2011.

Dr Brasch has led a number of committees, including her contributions as the Inaugural Chair of the National Family Law Committee and Chair of the Access to Justice Committee in the Australian Bar Association between 2016 to 2020. She has been extensively involved with the Law Council of Australia, becoming the President in 2021.

JUDGE ALICE CARTER

Judge Carter graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws from Monash University in 1993. She obtained a Master of Laws, also from Monash University, in 2002.

Judge Carter began her legal career as an associate to a former judge, the Hon Joseph Kay AM, of the Family Court. Following her admission as a practitioner in the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1996, Judge Carter completed her articles and went on to work as a solicitor with Hogg & Reid. Judge Carter was called to the Bar in 2006, and has worked as a barrister in private practice specialising exclusively in all aspects of family law.

JUDGE BRUCE SMITH

Judge Smith completed a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws from the University of New South Wales in 1991. In 1997, he obtained a Master of Laws from the University of Sydney.

In 1992, Judge Smith commenced his career as an associate within the Supreme Court of New South Wales. In 1993, he was admitted as a solicitor to the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Judge Smith later practised as a solicitor at Ferguson Holz Solicitors and Sparke Helmore Solicitors until he was called to the New South Wales Bar in 1998, where he practised in a wide range of matters. As a judge of the FCFCOA (Division 2), he has heard both family law and general federal law matters.

JUDGE ALISTER MCNAB

Judge McNab studied at Monash University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1985 and a Bachelor of Laws in 1987.

Judge McNab began his legal career as an articled clerk at Williams Winter and Higgs in 1987. In 1988, he began practising as a solicitor at Purves Clarke Richards, until his appointment as a judge of the FCFCOA (Division 2) in 2016. As a judge of the FCFCOA (Division 2), he has heard both family law and general federal law matters.

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