



ANTHONY ALBANESE
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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MARK DREYFUS KC MP
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
CABINET SECRETARY

APPOINTMENTS TO THE HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Justice Stephen Gageler AC** as the fourteenth Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia. Justice Gageler will commence as Chief Justice on 6 November 2023 upon the retirement of Chief Justice Susan Kiefel AC.

Justice Gageler has an outstanding reputation as a jurist. He is highly respected for his leadership abilities and deep knowledge and understanding of constitutional law. Justice Gageler is currently the most senior puisne Justice of the High Court. He has served on the High Court with distinction since 2012. Prior to this, Justice Gageler was the Commonwealth Solicitor-General.

Justice Gageler holds a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) and a Bachelor of Economics from the Australian National University and a Master of Laws from Harvard University. Justice Gageler was admitted as a Barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1989 and was appointed Senior Counsel in 2000.

We are also pleased to announce the appointment of **Justice Robert Beech-Jones** to the

High Court of Australia. Justice Beech-Jones will fill the vacancy created by the appointment of Justice Gageler as Chief Justice and will also commence on 6 November 2023.

Justice Beech-Jones has served on the Supreme Court of New South Wales since 2012. In 2021 he was appointed Chief Judge of the Common Law Division of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and a Judge of Appeal. Justice Beech-Jones spent his childhood in Tasmania, before moving to Canberra to study. He holds a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and a Bachelor of Science from the Australian National University. Justice Beech-Jones was admitted as a Barrister in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1992 and was appointed Senior Counsel in 2006.

The Government consulted extensively in the lead-up to this decision, including with all state and territory Attorneys-General, the Shadow Attorney-General, the heads of the Federal Courts and state and territory Supreme Courts, state and territory Bar associations and law societies, National Legal Aid, Australian Women Lawyers, the National Association of Community Legal Centres and deans of law schools across the country.

The Government thanks all those who provided nominations for these significant appointments. Justice Gageler and Justice Beech-Jones were strongly supported in the consultation process.

We also acknowledge and thank Chief Justice Kiefel for her exceptional service as Chief Justice of the High Court since 2017, Justice of the High Court since 2007, and as a former Justice of the Federal Court of Australia, Supreme Court of Queensland and Supreme Court of Norfolk Island.

On behalf of the Government and the Australian people, we congratulate Justice Gageler and Justice Beech-Jones on their appointments, and wish Chief Justice Kiefel all the very best for the future.

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