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New Judges to address migration backlog welcomed

The Law Council of Australia welcomes the announcement today that nine new Judges have been appointed to the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA) (Division 2) to help address backlogs of migration and protection matters.

“We commend the Australian Government on its commitment to address these backlogs and improve the FCFCOA’s capacity to manage its caseload,” Law Council of Australia President, Mr Greg McIntyre SC said.

The Attorney-General announced that Mr Philip Corbett KC, Ms Amanda Coulthard, Ms Kate Cuthbertson SC, Mr Arran Gerrard, Mr Val Gostencnik, Ms Sheila Kaur, Mr Bernard McCabe, Mr Peter Papadopoulos, and Ms Rania Skaros have been appointed to the FCFCOA (Division 2), across the Brisbane, Sydney, Parramatta, Melbourne, and Adelaide Registries.

“The Judges appointed today include Kate Cuthbertson SC, a Director of the Law Council of Australia, and Peter Papadopoulos, who has been a valued member of our Federal Dispute Resolution Section’s Executive and Migration Law Committee, and more recently, a Member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). Both Kate and Peter are respected experts in their field and have already served our profession and community well, as I know they will continue to do in their new roles,” Mr McIntyre said.

“Bernard McCabe has also made welcome contributions to the Law Council’s engagement with the AAT over many years as an active participant in regular meetings between the AAT and our Federal Dispute Resolution Section’s AAT Liaison Committee.

“The appointments announced today are important because our courts must be adequately resourced to meet demand.

“In recent years, the FCFCOA’s pending migration caseload has increased significantly, posing real concerns to court users.

“Our courts must have the capacity to resolve matters both swiftly and fairly. We believe funding for additional Judges is one key part of the solution, so warmly welcome these new appointments.

“Visa backlogs at all stages profoundly impact people. Delays impede expeditious entry of migrants into our country, can be a disincentive to skilled migration, leave migrants who are waiting for a resolution of their matter vulnerable to exploitation and poverty, and have a very significant adverse cost to the Australian economy.”

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