



Supreme Court of New South Wales

SUPREME COURT CONGRATULATES NEW CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND NEW PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL

The Supreme Court of New South Wales congratulates the Honourable Justice Andrew Bell on his appointment as the new Chief Justice of New South Wales, and the Honourable Justice Julie Ward on her appointment as the President of the Court of Appeal, as announced today by NSW Attorney General Mark Speakman. The current Chief Justice, the Honourable Tom Bathurst AC, will retire on 5 March 2022 after more than a decade in the role.

Chief Justice Bathurst welcomed the announcements. “I congratulate both Justice Bell and Justice Ward on their appointments on behalf of all the judges of the Court,” Chief Justice Bathurst said.

“Justice Bell brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role. He has been an outstanding President of the Court of Appeal over the past three years, and I am confident that as Chief Justice, his leadership will further the proper administration of justice in this state.

“Not only is he widely respected within the legal profession and the judiciary, he is firmly established as one of the foremost legal minds in Australia. Justice Bell is incredibly hard working and passionate not only about the law, but about ensuring that it is applied impartially and fairly.”

“In Justice Ward, the Court of Appeal is gaining a highly qualified and dedicated President,” Chief Justice Bathurst said.

“Justice Ward brings extensive experience to the role, including an invaluable understanding of both trial and appellate jurisdictions. She has presided over incredibly complicated and technical subject matters during her time on the Court and possesses a phenomenal intellect and tireless work ethic. I have no doubt that she will do great things for the Court of Appeal.”

Justice Bell was appointed as the President of the New South Wales Court of Appeal in February 2019. During his time, he has presided over numerous high-profile appeals in both the Court of Appeal and Court of Criminal Appeal. His Honour currently leads a team of nine appeal judges and two acting judges of appeal, with the responsibility for overseeing more than 300 matters which come before the Court of Appeal every year.

Prior to his appointment to the Bench, Justice Bell practised as a barrister for 24 years and was appointed Senior Counsel in 2006. Throughout that time, he appeared in 30 appeals in the High Court of Australia and conducted an extensive international arbitration practice.

His Honour brings not only breadth and depth of knowledge to the role of Chief Justice, but proven leadership abilities from his three years as President.

Justice Ward was elevated to the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 2008. Prior to this, she spent 26 years as a solicitor in commercial litigation, including as a partner at Mallesons Stephen Jaques (now King & Wood Mallesons). She was the first female solicitor to be directly appointed to the bench of the Supreme Court of New South Wales from private practice.

In 2012, Justice Ward was appointed as a Judge of Appeal of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and in 2017, she was appointed as the Chief Judge in Equity. Her Honour is the second woman to be appointed as President of the Court of Appeal.

The Supreme Court also pays tribute to the service of outgoing Chief Justice Tom Bathurst, who has guided the Court through many challenges and changes, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

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