



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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SENIOR BARRISTER JOINS SUPREME COURT BENCH

Highly experienced barrister Richard Cavanagh SC has been appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court of NSW, Attorney General Mark Speakman announced today.

“Mr Cavanagh’s impressive legal career spans 37 years, including 21 years at the Bar and a decade as Senior Counsel. He practises in commercial, equity and common law, appearing regularly in the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court and District Court in NSW, as well as the Federal Court,” Mr Speakman said.

In 1988, Mr Cavanagh became a partner at a prominent Sydney law firm. He began practising as a barrister 10 years later.

Mr Cavanagh has appeared in matters ranging from professional and product liability, construction, medical negligence, life insurance, to fraud and personal injury matters. He has undertaken significant appeal work, appearing in 80 cases in the NSW Court of Appeal.

Mr Cavanagh has been a member of the Bar Council and a Director of Bar Cover, which provides sickness and accident income protection insurance for barristers in Australia.

“The justice system is fortunate to be able to call upon lawyers of Mr Cavanagh’s standing to serve on the bench of the Supreme Court,” Mr Speakman said.

Mr Cavanagh will replace Hon Justice Monika Schmidt AM, who is retiring after 26 years on the bench.

“I thank Justice Schmidt for her outstanding contributions to the justice system during her 40 year legal career for which she was this year appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for services to the law, the judiciary and industrial relations,” Mr Speakman said.

“She continues to be an inspiration for female lawyers across NSW.”

Her Honour was the second woman to be appointed as a judge to the Industrial Relations Commission and Industrial Court in 1993 and has served on the Supreme Court bench since 2009.

Her previous appointments included separate periods as Deputy President for both the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW and the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

Justice Schmidt retires on 11 September. Mr Cavanagh will be sworn in on 16 September.