



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL
THE HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP**

MEDIA RELEASE

24 June 2009

APPOINTMENT OF FAMILY COURT JUDGE

Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, today announced the appointment of Mr Stewart Austin to the Newcastle registry of the Family Court of Australia.

“It is with great pleasure that I announce Mr Austin’s appointment as a Justice of the Family Court,” Mr McClelland said.

Mr Austin’s appointment follows the retirement of the Hon Justice Mullane in September 2008.

“Justice Mullane’s distinguished career culminated in more than 22 years of dedicated and energetic service to the Family Court.”

Mr Austin will take up his appointment to the Family Court in July 2009.

Mr Austin holds a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Jurisprudence from the University of New South Wales and was admitted to the Supreme Court of NSW in 1984 and the High Court of Australia in 1988. Mr Austin was admitted as a barrister in 1997. Prior to this he was an Arbitrator for the Local Court of NSW (1995-2003) and a partner at Burgess Austin Solicitors (1989-1997).

Mr Austin has engaged in continuous work as a litigation lawyer for 24 years in both civil and criminal litigation. In civil proceedings he has acted for both plaintiff and defendant in litigation involving family law, industrial law, employment law, equity, building cases, commercial and common law causes. In criminal law Mr Austin has acted for both prosecution and defence in jury trials, sentence hearings and appeals before the Supreme, District and Local Courts.

Mr Austin’s appointment is the first for the Family Court made under the Government’s new transparent process for judicial appointments. The Government is pleased with the quality of expressions of interest and nominations for the position from that process.

Media Contact: Adam Siddique 0407 473 630