



Pacific Judicial Integrity Program

PJIP Judicial Network Newsletter

Issue 8 | June 2025

Welcome to the eighth issue of the Pacific Judicial Integrity Program, Judicial Network Newsletter.

In the first quarter of 2025, Chief Justice Debra Mortimer, Justice Stephen Burley, Nicole Cherry and I attended the Pacific Judicial Conference, Regional Coordination Meeting and Chief Justices Leadership Forum in Auckland, New Zealand. It was wonderful to meet with so many of you.

Building on the foundation and curriculum developed by PJIP, the Pacific Centre for Judicial Excellence (PC JE) successfully delivered a workshop on the Managing and Reporting on Fraud and Corruption Cases Workshop for Court Officers in Port Moresby (May 2025).

Also in May, PJIP launched the Pacific Judicial Officers' Handbook on Fraud and Corruption Offences. As PJIP is coming to an end, the Federal Court of Australia is transitioning all PJIP curricula and resources to Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence for the Centre to continuing delivering related workshops and keeping the resources up to date.

PJIP's concluding activities comprise:

- Unconscious Bias in Judicial Decision-Making Webinar, 12 June 2025
- NJCA: Managing Sexual Assault Hearings Program for Judges via Livestream, 4 July 2025
- Evidentiary Challenges and Practical Strategies for Judges Webinar, 16 July 2025

We wish to express our sincere gratitude for your time and support of PJIP activities over the past three-years. Your leadership and wisdom have created highly specialist training curricula and resources, that we hope will assist judges and court officials to navigate the complexities of fraud and corruption related cases.

Helen Burrows

Director, International Programs
Federal Court of Australia

Upcoming events

Experiences of Unconscious Bias in Judicial Decision-Making Webinar (12 June)

With the aim of further exploring and understanding perspectives on unconscious bias in Pacific judicial decision-making, the PJIP is conducting a webinar on Unconscious Bias in Judicial Decision-Making on 12 June 2025. The webinar builds on Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika of Papua New Guinea's [keynote address](#) and the Unconscious Bias in Judicial Decision-Making webinar, delivered by Justice Sarah Derrington AM of the Federal Court of Australia in October 2023. The webinar will be facilitated by Honourable Justice Sarah Derrington AM, who will discuss perspectives on unconscious bias and insights into bias reduction and mitigation. Invitations to attend the webinar have been circulated to all Chief Justices participating in the PJIP.

NJCA: Managing Sexual Assault Hearings Program for Judges (4 July)

On 4 July 2025, the National Judicial College of Australia will conduct a program for judges about Managing Sexual Assault Hearings. The program focuses on stereo types and bias, pre-trial recordings, issues related to memory in determining credibility/reliability, cross-examination, special directions, minimising trauma. The program will be delivered by Chief Justices and other judicial officers from around Australia and will take place in Darwin between 08:45-17:00. To facilitate attendance by our Pacific friends, PJIP have arranged a live stream that we invite you/and your colleagues to join. The invitation to submit the interest has been circulated to all Chief Justices participating in the PJIP.

Evidentiary Challenges and Practical Strategies for Judges Webinar (16 July)

The federal Court of Australia will host its final webinar under the PJIP on Wednesday, 16 July 2025. The Evidentiary Challenges and Practical Strategies for Judges webinar will focus on common issues including direct and circumstantial evidence, hostile witnesses, hearsay evidence and exceptions to the hearsay rule. It will also include an opportunity for questions and discussion about practical strategies to apply relevant principles in court. Building on the webinar: Evidentiary Issues for Judges led by Justice Bromwich in February 2024 (can be seen [here](#)). The two-hour webinar will be hosted by the Honourable Acting Justice Rebecca Christensen SC, Supreme Court of Australia Capital Territory. Invitations to attend the webinar have been circulated to all Chief Justices participating in the PJIP.

Pacific Judicial Conference, Regional Coordination Meeting & Chief Justices Leadership Forum

In February 2025, Chief Justice Debra Mortimer, Justice Stephen Burley, Helen Burrows and Nicole Cherry attended the Pacific Judicial Conference, Regional Coordination Meeting and Chief Justices Leadership Forum, hosted by Chief Justice Winkelmann in Auckland, New Zealand. Focussing on *strengthening the institution of the Judiciary* there were a wealth of interesting and challenging topics discussed



including the existential crisis caused by climate change and building a diverse judiciary.

The inaugural Regional Coordination Meeting, hosted by Chief Justice Winkelmann and attended by the New Zealand Judiciary, PJSP, PNGCJE, UK Judicial College, US Ninth Circuit's Pacific Islands Committee, MFAT and DFAT. Discussion centred on how program managers and donors can better coordinate across the Pacific law and justice sector to prevent duplication, gaps and clashes in activity schedules.

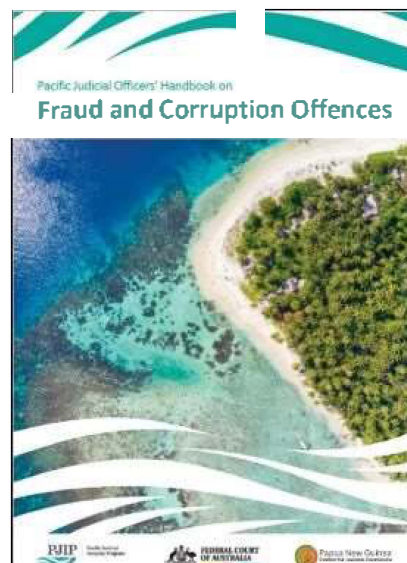
At the Chief Justices Leadership Forum Chief Justice Mortimer shared a presentation outlining a brief retrospective of the Federal Court's long-standing relations with the Pacific; shared progress information about the Pacific Judicial Integrity Program and discussed the scope and content of the next funding proposal, based on the Chief Justices' priority needs.

The team is grateful to the Chief Justices for their kind feedback and letters of support welcoming continued assistance in our joint pursuit for the rule of law.

Pacific Judicial Officers' Handbook on Fraud and Corruption Offences

Officially launched on 26 May, the Pacific Judicial Officers' Handbook on Fraud and Corruption Offences intends to serve as a practical and useful tool to support judicial officers considering fraud and corruption cases. Developed under the guidance of the region's Chief Justices and Judges, by the PJIP team, the Handbook has three parts:

- Part 1: *Generally applicable principles and concepts*
- Part 2: *Overview and Comparative Analysis of legislative provisions on fraud and corruption related offences*
- Part 3: *Jurisdiction-Specific Offence Guide and Case Summaries*



The Handbook can be accessed [here](#).

The Handbook official launch was opened by the Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Australia, Debra Mortimer. Her Honour's opening remarks were followed by a presentation by Honourable Justice Wigney of the Federal Court of Australia; Justice John Carey of the Papua New Guinea judiciary and Centre for Judicial Excellence; Registrar Alicia Ditton from the Federal Criminal Jurisdiction of the Federal Court of Australia. We wish to express our appreciation to the contributing judges, registrars and researchers from each jurisdiction who contributed to the development of the Handbook.

International Day for Judicial Wellbeing

On 4 March 2025, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution A/79/L.52 with 160 in favour, 1 against (United States) and 3 abstentions (Haiti, Madagascar, and Syria).

The resolution officially declares **25 July** as the International Day for Judicial Well-being. The draft resolution is co-sponsored by 70 member states including Pacific countries and Australia.

PJIP would like to congratulate the region's Chief Justices for their extraordinary efforts and support to creating international recognition of judicial wellbeing and Justice Rangajeeva Wimalasena, President of the Nauru Court of Appeal for being a key contributor for this historical achievement. The full resolution can be downloaded [here](#).



Managing and Reporting on Fraud and Corruption Cases Workshop, Port Moresby

The Pacific Centre for Judicial Excellence (PCJE) hosted an inaugural three-day workshop from 14-16 May in Port Moresby, aimed at enhancing regional capacity to manage and report on fraud and corruption cases. Supported by the Australian-PNG Law and Justice (APLJ) Program, the training builds on the Pacific Judicial Integrity Program (PJIP) and is delivered in partnership with PNGCJE.



The workshop was opened by Ms. Tessa Plueckhahn, Law and Justice Counsellor at the Australian High Commission, who praised the commitment of participants and reaffirmed Australia's support for regional justice. Designed by Registrars from the Federal Court of Australia and Assistant Registrars from PNG, the training covers ethical practices, evidence handling, data security, and personnel wellbeing, while encouraging peer learning and regional collaboration.

Mrs. Stacey Levakia-Wali, Assistant Director of PNGCJE and PCJE Program Officer, welcomed participants from across the Pacific and 31 provincial registry officers. Participating nations were The Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. She emphasized the importance of regional cooperation, noting that PCJE was established through an MoU signed by Chief Justices from 15 Pacific Island nations to support judicial education and training.

Registrar of the National and Supreme Court of PNG, Mr. Ian Augerea, commended the initiative as a

milestone and urged participants to become change agents in the fight against fraud and corruption. The workshop, coordinated by PCJE Program Officer Ms. Arabella Owen, serves as a vital platform for sharing practices and strengthening judicial systems across the Pacific.

Resources

Please find below a collection of recently developed resources that may be of interest to you and your Court.

1. Without Fear, Favour or Affection, *The Honourable Chief Justice Helen Bowskill, Supreme Court of Queensland.* To read the full speech, please click [here](#). On 6 June 2024, the Honourable Chief Justice Helen Bowskill delivered a speech at the Council of Australasian Tribunals National Conference in Brisbane, Queensland. “The judicial oath incorporates several things, including a promise to do our job without fear, favour, or affection. Now, of course, that captures the essence of the judicial role within our system of government: independent and impartial. But I want to play with those words a bit and suggest to you that they also capture some other ideas.”

2. Seven Random Points about Judging, *The Honourable Justice Robert Beech-Hones, High Court of Australia.* To read the edited version of the speech, please click [here](#). On 17 March 2024, the Honourable Justice Robert Beech-Jones delivered a speech on “Seven Random Points about Judging” for the commencement of the National Judicial Orientation Program in Brisbane, Queensland. 1)Judges are meant to resolve disputes, not create them. 2)Writing judgments 3) Vexatious litigants 4)Keep the trial moving 5)Getting rolled on appeal 6)Beware of secondary trauma 7)Press and the penguin.

3. Evidence, Practice and Procedure: Persuasion, *The Honourable David Js Jackson KC.* To read the full paper, please click [here](#). In May 2008, the Honourable David JS Jackson KC delivered the paper on “persuasion”. A barrister or advocate has been bombarded with the word “persuasion” quite a bit. We all know what it means, or at least we think we do. And all would agree that it is the aim of “advocacy”. There is a useful book written which employs the expression in its title, namely the *Technique of Persuasion* by Sir David Napley, first published in 1975 which was last revised in a fourth edition in 1991. Barristers in particular like to fasten on words such as “advocacy” and “persuasion”. There is now a professional connotation to their use in the context of our work lives.

Should there be any articles or resources that you would like to share with the Judicial Network, please send to pjip@fedcourt.gov.au.

Comments and Feedback



We welcome and appreciate comments or contributions. If you have any feedback or require further information, please contact the [PJIP team](#).



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