

People and capability supporting judicial work

The Federal Court's judicial work described in **Part 4** of this Report is supported by a range of specialist and professional staff whose contributions are essential to the administration of justice and an accessible and efficient experience for court users.

People supporting judicial work

Judicial registrars

Earlier parts of this report introduced the important role of judicial registrars in supporting the Federal Court to discharge its judicial work and resolve disputes more efficiently and effectively. This section outlines that role in more detail, including the statutory functions, delegated powers and list work performed by judicial registrars.

Judicial registrars are legal professionals appointed under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth) after taking an oath or affirmation of office. They are appointed for their expertise in areas of law within the Federal Court’s jurisdiction and perform statutory functions, as well as powers conferred by legislation, rules of court or delegation from judges.

In this context, delegated powers are powers that a judicial registrar may exercise because legislation, the Federal Court Rules or a judge authorises the judicial registrar to do so. These powers allow appropriate proceedings to progress without every step needing to be dealt with by a judge.

Judicial registrars exercise those powers in proceedings suitable for registrar determination or management, including case management conferences, mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, interlocutory issues, and final determinations in certain categories of proceedings that fall within specialist judicial registrar lists.

Judicial registrar lists, including the judicial registrar Corporations List, Bankruptcy List and National General Protections List, support the Federal Court’s judicial work by directing suitable proceedings to registrars who have authority to manage or determine them. This helps appropriate applications be dealt with efficiently, supports the timely progression of proceedings, and enables judges to focus on more complex proceedings that require judicial determination.

Together, this work forms part of the Federal Court’s capability to manage judicial work within its jurisdiction, delegated powers and available resources, while maintaining the distinction between judicial decision-making, delegated judicial work and court administration.

One important example of this work is mediation. Most court-ordered mediations are conducted by judicial registrars accredited under the Federal Court Mediator Accreditation Scheme.

Federal Court Mediator Accreditation Scheme

The Federal Court Mediator Accreditation Scheme supports the Federal Court’s mediation work by ensuring that mediations conducted through the Federal Court are undertaken by appropriately trained and accredited mediators. Judicial registrars accredited under the scheme conduct mediations across a range of practice areas. In that role, they assist parties to identify the issues in dispute, consider options for resolution and, where possible, reach agreement without the need for a trial or contested hearing. The scheme supports the Federal Court’s broader use of alternative dispute resolution and the efficient use of judicial resources.

Updated judicial registrar titles

Clear and consistent titles assist people who use, work with, or scrutinise the Federal Court to understand the functions being performed. During the reporting period, the Federal Court reviewed judicial registrar titles to improve consistency and reduce complexity. From 2 March 2026, titles were updated as shown in Table 5.1. The changes did not alter the powers, duties or responsibilities of the people holding those offices.

Table 5.1 Updated judicial registrar titles

Previous title	New title
New role	Deputy Principal Registrar
National Judicial Registrar & District Registrar	District Registrar (state/territory)
National Judicial Registrar—Appeals	Senior Judicial Registrar—Appeals
National Judicial Registrar—Original Jurisdiction	Senior Judicial Registrar—Original Jurisdiction
Senior National Judicial Registrar	Senior Judicial Registrar
National Judicial Registrar	Senior Judicial Registrar
Judicial Registrar	Judicial Registrar
National Registrar	Judicial Registrar

Judicial registrars of the Federal Court and its locations

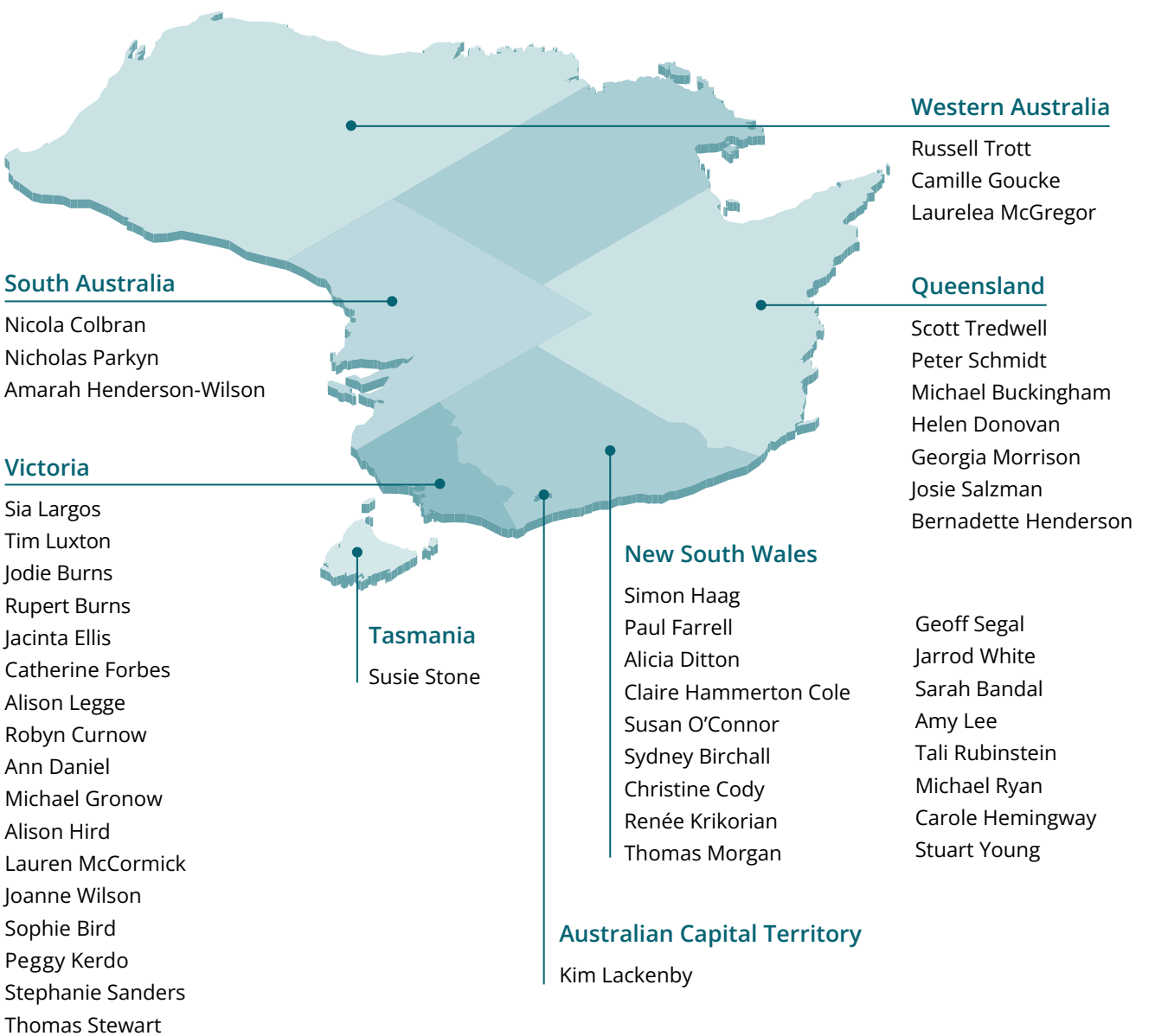


Figure 5.1: Judicial Registrars of the Federal Court and its locations

The following table lists judicial registrars holding a commission in the Federal Court of Australia as at 30 June 2026.

Table 5.2 Current Federal Court judicial registrars at 30 June 2026

Name	Title	Location
Sia Lagos	Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar	VIC
Nicola Colbran	Deputy Principal Registrar	SA
Scott Tredwell	General Counsel	QLD
Simon Haag	Senior Judicial Registrar—Appeals	NSW
Susie Stone	Senior Judicial Registrar—Original Jurisdiction & District Registrar TAS	TAS
Paul Farrell	District Registrar NSW/ACT	NSW
Tim Luxton	District Registrar VIC	VIC
Nicholas Parkyn	District Registrar SA/NT	SA

Table 5.2 Current Federal Court judicial registrars at 30 June 2026

Name	Title	Location
Peter Schmidt	District Registrar QLD	QLD
Russell Trott	District Registrar WA	WA
Jodie Burns	Senior Judicial Registrar	VIC
Rupert Burns	Senior Judicial Registrar	VIC
Alicia Ditton	Senior Judicial Registrar	NSW
Jacinta Ellis	Senior Judicial Registrar	VIC
Catherine Forbes	Senior Judicial Registrar	VIC
Camille Goucke	Senior Judicial Registrar	WA
Claire Hammerton Cole	Senior Judicial Registrar	NSW
Alison Legge	Senior Judicial Registrar	VIC
Laurelea McGregor	Senior Judicial Registrar	WA
Susan O'Connor	Senior Judicial Registrar	NSW
Sydney Birchall	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Michael Buckingham	Judicial Registrar	QLD
Christine Cody	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Robyn Curnow	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Ann Daniel	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Helen Donovan	Judicial Registrar	QLD
Michael Gronow	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Alison Hird	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Renée Krikorian	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Kim Lackenby	Judicial Registrar	ACT
Lauren McCormick	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Thomas Morgan	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Georgia Morrison	Judicial Registrar	QLD
Josie Salzman	Judicial Registrar	QLD
Geoff Segal	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Jarrold White	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Joanne Wilson	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Sarah Bandal	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Sophie Bird	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Amarah Henderson-Wilson	Judicial Registrar	SA
Peggy Kerdo	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Amy Lee	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Tali Rubinstein	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Stephanie Sanders	Director Legal Operations Data & Analytics	VIC
Thomas Stewart	Judicial Registrar	VIC
Michael Ryan	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Bernadette Henderson	In-house Counsel	QLD
Carole Hemingway	Judicial Registrar	NSW
Stuart Young	Judicial Registrar	NSW

Registry

As described in **Parts 1 and 3**, the Federal Court is a national court which operates from physical locations and buildings across Australia, in every capital city and in some regional locations. Each of these physical buildings from which the Federal Court operates is a 'registry' that members of the public can access. Each registry of the Federal Court could not function without dedicated registry staff, who assist members of the public, especially litigants in person, with the procedural steps involved in commencing and maintaining proceedings.

Registry staff include client services officers, court officers, and other court support staff, who form part of the Federal Court's Court and Tribunal Services or Corporate Services, which are set out in **Part 6** of this Report.

Legal case managers

Legal case managers support judicial registrars in the progression of proceedings through the Federal Court. They work closely with judicial registrars, judges' chambers and registry staff to coordinate case management processes, communicate with parties and practitioners, and assist with the preparation of proceedings for hearings, conferences and other court events.

For court users, legal case managers are often an important operational contact about the procedural management of a proceeding. They assist with court lists, hearing arrangements, documents, compliance with timetables and directions, and the movement of proceedings through the Federal Court's national docket system. Their work helps ensure that proceedings are ready to be dealt with by a judicial registrar and that orders and procedural steps are followed.

Chambers staff: associates, research associates and executive assistants

Each judge of the Federal Court is supported by staff in their office, known as their 'Chambers'. The chambers staff assist with the legal, administrative and practical work required to prepare for hearings, manage proceedings and finalise judgments and orders. This support is usually provided by an associate and an executive assistant, or by two associates, depending on the particular chambers model.

Associates, research associates and executive assistants support judges and chambers with the legal, administrative and operational work required for proceedings. Their work assists with hearing preparation, urgent applications, communications, draft orders, judgments and the day-to-day

management of proceedings in chambers. This support helps judges progress proceedings and conduct hearings in an orderly way.

Chambers staff also help maintain the formal record of each judge's proceedings. They assist with orders, documents, procedural steps, judgments and other court materials. This work supports the integrity of the Federal Court's records and helps ensure that parties, practitioners and the public can rely on them.

Associate positions are usually fixed-term roles of about 12 to 18 months. This structure gives lawyers close exposure to the work of Federal Court judges, federal jurisdiction and court procedure. It also contributes to the broader legal system by giving early-career lawyers practical insight into how federal proceedings are managed and decided.

Client service officers

Client service officers play a vital role in the administration of justice. Often serving as an early point of contact for litigants, legal practitioners and members of the public, they support the accurate, efficient and impartial administration of the Federal Court's processes.

Working closely with both litigants in person and lawyers they provide practical information about court processes including filing and registry services. This includes assisting court users to understand procedural requirements, comply with Federal Court rules and navigate the Federal Court's physical and digital environments while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

Court officers

Court officers play a vital role, serving as the people who help ensure every hearing runs smoothly, professionally and efficiently. Working at the heart of courtroom operations, they support judges, registrars, legal practitioners, litigants and members of the public by preparing courtrooms, managing documents, administering oaths to witnesses and assisting with courtroom procedures. Their work helps create an environment in which parties can be heard fairly and proceedings can be conducted with confidence and respect.

Through their professionalism, courtesy and practical support, they help parties, witnesses, lawyers and visitors navigate what can often be a complex and unfamiliar environment. By ensuring proceedings are organised, respectful and accessible, they contribute to public confidence in the Federal Court and support the fair and efficient administration of justice. They also work closely with judges chambers' and support practical arrangements for hearings.

Behind the Shelves

Supporting Justice through library services

The Federal Court Library is one of the Court's hidden strengths. Its national team ensures judges, judicial registrars and staff can access authoritative information when they need it, supporting complex research, historical inquiries and urgent requests that assist the administration of justice.



Adelaide Library



Melbourne Library



A conversation with Georgia Livissianos, Director Library and Information Services

The Federal Court and its staff and officers are indebted to the skill, knowledge and loyalty of its team of Librarians. Their resourcefulness, speed and intuition are without peer in the Federal Court. They maintain an immense national collection and are themselves custodians of the Federal Court's institutional memory. They succeed in all things with characteristic humility and wit.

What role does the Federal Court Library play in supporting the work of the Court?

The Library supports judges, judicial registrars and staff by providing access to reliable legal information, research expertise and knowledge services. Its national team helps users find authoritative material quickly and confidently, including legislation, case law, specialist commentary, overseas authorities and difficult-to-locate resources.

How does the Library's work extend beyond legal research?

The team manages print and digital collections, maintains the library intranet, delivers training and inductions, and provides tailored current awareness services for the Federal Court's NPAs. These services help identify key judgments, legislative developments, publications and commentary in Australia and overseas.

How is the role of law librarians changing?

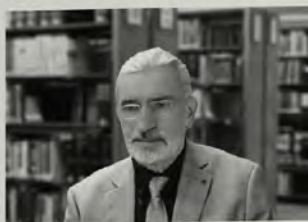
As legal research becomes more digital and information-rich, law librarians increasingly combine legal research, information management, technology, training and education expertise. They help users navigate large volumes of information, assess the reliability of sources and choose the right tools for the task.

What is the Library's focus for the future?

Technology continues to change how legal information is found, used and shared. The Library is exploring how emerging tools, including artificial intelligence, may support research and information services, while remaining focused on accuracy, reliability, risk management and confidence in the integrity of the Federal Court's information services. Its contribution remains both practical and strategic, supporting the Federal Court's work and preserving its institutional memory.



Sydney Library



Brisbane Library



Perth Library

Supporting the Federal Courts work

The CEO and Principal Registrar is responsible for providing registry and corporate services to the Federal Court. These functions are performed through a shared services model with other courts and tribunals. This section provides short reports on the support provided by Court and Tribunal Services and Corporate Services.

For more comprehensive reports on the functions and support provided by Court and Tribunal Services and Corporate Services in 2025–26 please refer to the Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity 2025–26 Annual Report.

Court and Tribunal Services

Report from the A/g Executive Director, Court and Tribunal Services

Court and Tribunal Services (CTS) is responsible for providing registry services to support the operations of the Federal Court. This includes providing high-level support for the judiciary and court users, maximising operational effectiveness through streamlined structures and digital innovations, maintaining a structure that promotes flexibility and responsiveness to new opportunities and demands, and supporting the Federal Court to take full advantage of the benefits of the Digital Court Program. CTS is also responsible for line management of Judges' chambers staff and managing several core contracts, such as the transcription program, as well as interpreter and translation services. CTS is composed of a range of teams responsible for delivering in-person registry services in locations across Australia, a national filing team, a national enquiries centre, and a court logistics and digital practice team.

Staff manage court filing processes, enquiries, document lodgements, and subpoenas. In addition to face-to-face services, staff support the logistical operations of each registry site. Staff process urgent enquiries and applications and provide support for a diverse range of clients with differing needs. A national approach ensures that the quality and productivity of registry services is the very best it can be. The focus on building consistency in registry practice across all court locations and expert knowledge will continue to support the important work of the judges and judicial registrars.

The 2025–26 reporting period was a year of optimisation and modernisation for CTS. The Registry Optimisation Program continued to deliver initiatives and supported high-level outcomes. Focus areas included improving access to data to better inform and enhance client service systems, as well as rolling out targeted staff training to ensure the delivery of high-quality client services.

CTS implemented a digital system to capture key client service data across its registry locations. Building on this foundation, CTS commenced development of an Integrated Client Service System, with the discovery phase now successfully completed to inform the next stages of design and implementation. CTS developed a national onboarding and induction program for client service staff. To complement this, client service skills documentation was developed to ensure staff are tracking the important skills and training required for high-quality service delivery.

Following the introduction of a modern contact centre system in the previous year, CTS has focused on optimising and evaluating its new functionalities to enhance reporting capabilities and improve the client service experience. To support this, CTS has implemented a quality assurance program for phone and live chat enquiries, underpinned by a code of conduct and defined quality metrics. This framework is designed to drive consistency, accountability, and higher service standards, ensuring the needs of the community are effectively met.

CTS continued to strengthen the knowledge and training resources available to registry staff to support consistent, high-quality registry practices and processes. This work included the continued development of a national client service officer manual and national induction planning, together with comprehensive guidance for registry staff on the Taxation NPA and Commonwealth Workplace Protection proceedings. Registry staff also received information and training on their role in supporting the Australian Competition Tribunal and upon the release of the Litigants in Person Practice Note. In addition, CTS piloted a centralised management system for document inspections by non-parties, enhanced registry complaints handling procedures, and provided training on the amendments made to the Federal Court Rules.

We also continued to support enhanced public understanding of the role of the Federal Court through a range of engagement activities. Registry staff contributed to educational programs with schools and universities, including a 'Law Day Out' for high school students, and supported visits by international delegations and other organisations with an interest in the work of the Federal Court. CTS also facilitated and supported 246 livestreams of court events, including hearings and judicial ceremonies.

We look forward to continuing our work with Chief Justice Mortimer and CEO and Principal Registrar Sia Lagos, to provide high-quality and innovative registry services to support the operations of the Federal Court.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides the essential business capabilities that enable the Federal Court and National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT). These services include technology, people and culture, finance, security, communications, information management, property, procurement, governance, publishing and library services.

During the reporting period, Corporate Services embedded the operating model introduced in the previous year, strengthening accountability, clarifying responsibilities and better aligning resources and specialist capability.

Significant progress was made in delivering innovative, secure and integrated digital solutions for the Federal Court and NNTT. This includes the replacement of all laptops, expanding video-conferencing capability so that all courtrooms are now equipped with up-to-date technology and progressing the transition of critical systems to contemporary cloud-based environments. This work lays the foundations for continued improvement to the Federal Court's case management system, CourtPath, supporting enhanced user experience and expanding capabilities for Federal Court judges, registrars and staff.

Corporate Services continued to invest in the people who support the work of the Federal Court and the NNTT, with initiatives focused on leadership capability, workforce development, employee wellbeing and workplace culture. This included the rollout of the Manager Essentials program, expanding access to online learning tools and enhanced performance and development practices. The People & Culture Team also assisted the Federal Court with strengthening support for judicial wellbeing services during 2025–26 which included enhancements to wellbeing resources, improving access to confidential and independent support for the judges.

As preparations progressed for the Federal Court's 50th Anniversary in 2026–27, Corporate Services supported a range of initiatives during 2025–26 to help mark this significant milestone. This included work to support the development of a dedicated anniversary website, digital displays across registries and the identification and preservation of archival material that will help tell the story of the Federal Court's first 50 years. Corporate Services looks forward to continuing to support the Federal Court's anniversary program in the year ahead. In parallel, work progressed to modernise information management arrangements and preserve the accessibility and authenticity of significant Federal Court and NNTT records, helping to safeguard important institutional history for future generations.

The Library Team continued to facilitate access to authoritative information and research expertise across the Federal Court, including directly supporting judges, judicial registrars and their staff, and continued to deliver expert research and knowledge support. In 2025–26 the Judgments Team received and published 2,030 judgments. The team continued to ensure judgments were published promptly on the Federal Court's website and shared with AustLII and other publishers, reflecting the Federal Court's commitment to access to justice.

The transcription and recording continuity event was a major focus for Corporate Services during 2025–26. It required a coordinated response from specialist teams across Corporate Services who worked closely with the Federal Court to maintain continuity of these critical services. Drawing on expertise from across technology, procurement, governance, finance, communications and other corporate functions, Corporate Services helped support the successful implementation of response arrangements while minimising disruption to court operations. The commitment and adaptability of staff across the broader Corporate Services group also ensured the continued delivery of essential business services, strategic initiatives and operational priorities throughout the response period.

We thank the Federal Court judges and colleagues across the Federal Court and NNTT for their ongoing partnership and commitment throughout the year. Building on the progress made during the year, Corporate Services looks forward to continuing its partnership with the Federal Court and NNTT to deliver the people, systems and services that support effective, accessible and efficient justice outcomes.

Digital Court Capability

Courtroom technology and digital hearing capability

In the reporting period, the Federal Court placed a strong emphasis on upgrading digital courtroom technology, with the implementation of new court-managed digital recording and transcription systems. This uplift has transformed how proceedings are captured and transcribed and is closely aligned with the broader strategy of providing innovative, secure and robust digital services.

The Federal Court also invested in the expansion of video-conferencing, audio-visual systems, and collaboration technologies to support flexible hearing arrangements and enhance accessibility for court users across all locations. Collectively, these advancements ensure the Federal Court provides modern, efficient, and accessible services.

Digital capability and information management

Alongside these technology upgrades, the Federal Court continued to advance the Digital Court Program, with CourtPath serving as the primary case management platform for Federal Law jurisdictions. This program is progressively replacing legacy systems with integrated, contemporary digital solutions and preparing for the enablement of future digital services, such as the controlled implementation of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Significant advancements were also made in our strategic focus areas of cloud adoption, data management, supporting the security, reliability, and sustainability of the Federal Court's technology environment. Enhanced data governance is supporting evidence-based decision-making and positioning the Federal Court to responsibly leverage emerging technologies, including AI.