

Media Release

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP
Attorney-General



Wednesday, 25 November 2020

NEW APPOINTMENTS TO VICTORIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION

The Victorian Government has today announced the appointment of Dr Vivian Waller and Kathleen Foley to the Victorian Law Reform Commission (VLRC).

Together, Dr Waller and Ms Foley bring more than 40 years' experience to the VLRC – and will play an important role in developing and coordinating future law reform in Victoria.

Dr Vivian Waller was admitted to legal practice in 1995 and has 25 years of experience representing victim-survivors of sexual abuse.

In 2006, Dr Waller was bestowed a Women Lawyers Achievement Award for her services to survivors of sexual assault.

The following year, Dr Waller established her own legal firm – dedicated to helping victims of crime and people who have endured sexual assault or child abuse. Dr Waller was also instrumental in the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, where she represented 20 survivor witnesses.

Dr Waller holds a Doctorate in Law from the University of Melbourne, and a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from Monash University.

Since 2009, Ms Foley has worked as a barrister and served as a member of the Victorian Bar Council and as a member of the executive of both the Commercial Bar Association and the Women Barristers Association.

Prior to her admission to the Victorian Bar, Ms Foley was an Associate to Justice Hayne of the High Court of Australia and excelled in positions as an attorney in New York and a solicitor in Western Australia.

Ms Foley has also developed a significant public interest litigation practice at the Bar, and in 2016 was awarded the Victorian Bar's Susan Crennan AC QC award for her pro bono work.

She holds a Master of Laws from Harvard Law School, and a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Western Australia.

The Government recently asked the Commission to review and report on the state's laws relating to rape, sexual assault and associated adult and child sexual offences. Both Dr Waller and Ms Foley will assist in this work to improve processes and reduce the trauma experienced by victims.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jill Hennessy

"The Victorian Law Reform Commission ensures that our legal system is inclusive and accessible for all Victorians, and I congratulate Dr Waller and Ms Foley on their appointments."

"Both Dr Waller and Ms Foley bring a tremendous amount of experience to their roles – and their legal expertise will be invaluable."

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