

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Tuesday, 1 March 2022

## **NEW JUDGES APPOINTED TO THE COUNTY COURT OF VICTORIA**

The Victorian Government has today made four new appointments to the County Court of Victoria.

Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes congratulated barristers Gary Clark, Andrew Fraatz, Simon Moglia and Maria Tsikaris on their appointments as judges of the County Court of Victoria.

Mr Clark has more than four decades of legal experience and was admitted to the Victorian Bar in 2015. Mr Clark has dedicated his career to ensuring access to the law for all Victorians, including working hard to ensure the retention of Supreme Court circuits in regional Victoria and common law rights for injured workers.

He served regional communities, particularly Mildura, where he undertook common law and serious injury circuit work. Mr Clark replaces Judge Christopher O'Neill, who retired on 31 December 2021.

Ms Tsikaris has practised law for 32 years and was admitted to the Victorian Bar in 2005. She has significant experience in personal injury, public and product liability, and insurance litigation, advising both plaintiffs and defendants.

Ms Tsikaris served as senior legal adviser for medical panels providing expert legal guidance to medical professionals. She replaces Judge Philip Misso, who retired on 31 December 2021 and was appointed as a reserve judge of the court on 1 February 2022.

Mr Fraatz brings 27 years of legal experience to his new role and was admitted to the Victorian Bar in 2003. As counsel, Mr Fraatz had a busy common law and commercial litigation practice, with an emphasis in major torts and personal injury claims. He appeared regularly in class actions relating to property damage and personal injuries.

He served five years as a volunteer at Community Connections Pty Ltd Legal Centre and is a qualified mediator.

Mr Fraatz replaces Judge David Brookes, who retired on 18 January 2022 and was appointed as a reserve judge of the court on 1 February 2022.

Mr Moglia has committed his career to serving the community. Prior to legal practice he worked in the community sector for 15 years, before commencing with Victoria Legal Aid in 2001.

Mr Moglia was admitted to the Victorian Bar in 2006, and has practised primarily in the criminal jurisdiction in the County and Supreme Courts. He replaces Judge Irene Lawson, who retired on 6 February 2022.

Their appointments will commence on 1 March 2022.

### **Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes**

*"These new judges bring broad and extensive experience from their respective legal careers and will be excellent additions to the County Court of Victoria."*

*"I would like to thank Judge O'Neill, Judge Brookes, Judge Lawson, and Judge Misso for their valuable contributions to Victoria's justice system."*