

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Program: Family Court of Australia

Question No. SBE16/077

Senator Roberts asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 2016:

1. How many current judicial vacancies are there in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia?
2. How many Judges and Justices of the Federal Court of Australia and Family Court of Australia will reach the statutory age of retirement by 31 December 2017?
3. Do you agree there is no statutory or regulatory limit on the number of judges that can be appointed to the Federal Circuit Court of Australia?
4. All of the terms of appointment of the members of the Family Law Council have now expired. When will you be appointing members to the Family Law Council as there are currently no members appointed to it [s115 of the Family Law Act]
5. Is the Government intending to reintroduce the Family Law Amendment (Financial Agreements and other Measures) Bill 2015 to the Parliament in its current form, and if so, when will that occur?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. As at 21 December 2016 there was one vacancy in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.
2. Two, Chief Justice, the Honourable Diana Bryant AO, in the Family Court of Australia and Justice the Honourable Christopher Jessup in the Federal Court of Australia.
3. The number of judges in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia is a function of its appropriation, which is sourced in statute.
4. This is a matter for government.
5. This is a matter for government.