

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

Program: 1.4 - Civil Justice Policy and Programmes

Question No. AE16/073

Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 9 February 2016:

1. Judge Roberts of the Federal Circuit Court is set to retire in the middle of this year. Will the Government replace the judge when he retires?
 - a. Has the Government begun selecting a new judge?
 - b. Has the Government sought expressions of interest?
 - c. Has the Government consulted with the profession or with the head of the jurisdiction about a new appointment?
 - d. Has the Government interviewed any candidates for appointment?
 - e. When will the Government announce the replacement candidate?
2. Does the Government guarantee that the services currently provided across North and North-West Tasmania by Judge Roberts will be maintained?
3. Does the Government have any plan to increase the proportion of female judges it appoints?

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

- 1 a-e. On 8 December 2016, the Governor-General appointed Mr Anthony Kelly QC to replace Judge McGuire following his relocation to the Launceston registry.
2. The Government continues to actively monitor the resourcing of each of the federal courts. The operation and management of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, including the delivery of services by the Court, is the responsibility of the Chief Judge, Mr John Pascoe AC CVO.
3. Decisions about judicial appointments are matters for Government. All judicial appointments are based on merit.