



HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

PRESS RELEASE

The High Court of Australia will commence making available to the public audio-visual recordings of its hearings from the 1st of October, 2013.

The High Court has been considering how to improve public access to its hearings. All hearings of the Court are open to the public. The Court also provides online access to a wide range of case-specific information. The Court has now decided to take the further step of publishing on its website audio-visual recordings of Full Court hearings heard in Canberra.

Recordings will be made available from an archive on the Court's website, initially likely to be a few business days after hearings. This will allow for vetting of recordings to avoid the possibility of information which should not be published being published – such as a name which is the subject of a publication constraint. This delay is likely to be reduced as Court experience grows. The recordings will cover all Full Court hearings heard in Canberra, other than Applications for Special Leave.

The Court's decision to take these steps was made having regard to the nature of its jurisdiction and is not intended to set any precedent for other courts.

Background Information

The Court provides on its website very comprehensive information relating to the conduct of hearings – including case management timelines, written submissions, transcripts of oral arguments, judgments and judgment summaries (see <http://www.hcourt.gov.au/cases/current-cases-submissions> and <http://www.hcourt.gov.au/cases/cases-heard>).

The Court's 'alert' systems covering judgments, case summaries, judgment summaries and publications, now has 20,000 subscribers.

The Court also has a well-developed school visitor program. Around 35,000 pupils visited the Court in Canberra in the past year, receiving guided tours and presentations on the Court's constitutional and appellate role, as well as attending hearings when possible.

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