



FAMILY COURT
OF AUSTRALIA

Annual Report

2008–2009



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Alternative formats

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The online version contains links to the 2008–09 Attorney-General's Portfolio Budget Statements.

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The cover features photos of the Garfield Barwick Commonwealth Law Courts Parramatta; Chief Justice Bryant and Deputy Chief Justice Faulks; and a National Enquiry Centre staff member.



FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA
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18 September 2009

The Hon Robert McClelland MP
Attorney- General
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Attorney

I am pleased to present the Annual Report on the operations of the Family Court of Australia for the financial year ending 30 June 2009.

The report is submitted in accordance with section 38S subsections (1) and (3) of the *Family Law Act 1975*. The Act requires the Family Court to prepare and furnish you with a report of the management of the administrative affairs of the Court during the preceding 12 months. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's *Requirements for Annual Reports 2008-09*.

This is the Family Court of Australia's 20th Annual Report.

Yours sincerely

Diana Bryant
Chief Justice



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READER'S GUIDE

The purpose of this report is to inform the Attorney-General, the Parliament, Court clients and the general public about the performance of the Family Court of Australia during the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009.

Prepared according to parliamentary reporting requirements, the report defines the goals outlined in the Court's Portfolio Budget Statements and Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements and relates them to the results achieved during the year.

This report provides information on the Court's performance in relation to its stated outcome:

As Australia's specialist superior family court determine cases, including in particular those with complex law and facts, and provide national coverage as the appellate court in family law matters.

PART 1: The Chief Justice's year in review—comprises the Chief Justice's overview highlighting significant issues and initiatives the Court has undertaken during the reporting year.

PART 2: Overview of the Court—provides information about the Court, including its role, functions, powers, governance, organisational structure, initiatives and planning.

PART 3: Report on performance—reports on how the Court performed during the period against the outcome and the related outputs (judicial and registry services). The performance reports are based on the outcome and outputs framework and performance information in the 2008–09 Portfolio Budget Statements and 2008–09 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements for the Attorney-General's portfolio.

PART 4: Appeals—includes information about the Appeal Division, trends in appeals and appeals to the High Court.

PART 5: Significant and noteworthy judgments—contains summaries of some of the important Full Court decisions made during the 2008–09 financial year.

PART 6: Management and accountability—provides information on corporate governance, external scrutiny, human resource management, financial management, purchasing, consultants and contract management, legal services, property management and other activities relevant to the general administration of the Court.

PART 7: Financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2009—contains the audited financial statements for 2008–09.

PART 8: Appendices—includes the resource statement, staffing profile, freedom of information data, information about committees and judicial activities, and contact details.

The following references will assist readers to locate information in the annual report:

- Acronyms and abbreviations—page xi
- Compliance index—page 215
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An electronic version of this annual report is available from the Family Court of Australia's website (www.familycourt.gov.au).

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
ABGR	Australian Building Greenhouse Rating
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
AO	Officer of the Order of Australia
APS	Australian Public Service
AWA	Australian Workplace Agreement
BAU	business as usual
CEI	Chief Executive Instruction
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CJ	Chief Justice
Cth	Commonwealth
DCJ	Deputy Chief Justice
DVD	digital video disc
EL	Executive Level of the Australian Public Service
FAIM	Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management
FLC	Family Law Courts
FMA Act	<i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>
FMC	Federal Magistrates Court
FOI	freedom of information
GST	goods and services tax
ICT	information and communications technology
IT	information technology
NEC	National Enquiry Centre
PSM	Public Service Medal
RFD	Reserve Force Decoration
SES	Senior Executive Service of the Australian Public Service
YEAG	Young Employees Advisory Group