

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Racing



Wednesday, 28 January, 2015

TOP QC TO HEAD MEDICINAL CANNABIS REVIEW

Attorney-General Martin Pakula has appointed leading lawyer Dr Ian Freckelton, QC, as Special Commissioner to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's review into the use of medicinal cannabis.

Dr Freckelton will lead the investigation into the use of medical cannabis to treat people with terminal or life-threatening illnesses.

Dr Freckelton has more 30 years' experience in law and was made Queen's Counsel in 2007.

This appointment cements the Andrews Labor Government's election commitment to legalise the medical use of marijuana by reviewing the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981.

Mr Pakula said Dr Freckelton's expertise in administrative law and disciplinary law, coronial law, medico-legal work and family law would be invaluable for the review.

Dr Freckelton has been an Honorary Fellow of the Australasian College of Legal Medicine since 2007, and was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences Australia and the Australian Academy of Law in 2012.

He has written on disciplinary law for health practitioners and is the editor and co-editor of several health law journals and books.

His appointment as Special Commissioner is effective from 27 January 2015 to 31 August 2015.

Mr Pakula has also re-appointed David Jones to the Victorian Law Reform Commission effective from 1 March 2015, for another three years.

Mr Jones has been a part-time member of the commission since 2012, and has been practising law for more than 40 years.

He has a broad range of experience as a County Court judge and was President of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal from 1998 to 1999.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

"Dr Freckelton's research and scholarly talent in health law makes him an ideal choice to review the use of medical cannabis."

"This is an important step in investigating the legal practicalities in making medical marijuana available to help people in dire need."

"Mr Jones' previous time at the Victorian Law Reform Commission and 40 years of law give me great confidence in his re-appointment to the commission."

"His work at the commission over the past three years round out the depth of experience he brings to this role."