



FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

**THE HON JUSTICE JOHN E MIDDLETON
JUDGES' CHAMBERS
FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA
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29 May 2019

Dr Matthew Collins QC
President, Victorian Bar
Room 3204, Aickin Chambers
200 Queen Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Sent by email: matt.collins@vicbar.com.au

Matt

Dear Dr Collins,

**COMMERCIAL & CORPORATIONS NPA USER GROUPS – GENERAL AND
INSOLVENCY**

In 2016 the Federal Court of Australia introduced its National Court Framework initiative, and divided its workload into National Practice Areas (NPAs). Panels of specialised judges and judicial registrars have been appointed by reference to those NPAs. Those panels operate at a national level, but they also have a presence in each registry of the Court. Practice notes have been issued for the respective NPAs, and earlier this year the work of judicial registrars was formally integrated into the NPAs.

The Court now wishes to engage with the profession on an ongoing and structured basis by establishing user groups. The user groups will be convened by the National Coordinating Judges for the respective NPAs, and will be supported by the National Judicial Registrars for those NPAs.

For the Commercial & Corporations NPA and at a National level, those persons are Justices John Middleton and Lindsay Foster, and National Judicial Registrars Paul Farrell, Tim Luxton, Phillip Allaway, Rupert Burns, Murray Belcher and Claire Gitsham. It is envisaged that the user groups will provide a useful forum to discuss significant developments in the law as well as practical issues which may arise in respect of the Court's practice and procedure. This would be at both a State and National level.

It is proposed there be a general user group for the Commercial and Corporations NPA, and a separate user group for insolvency (bankruptcy and corporate insolvency), and each State have its own user group although part of the overall National co-ordinated approach.

The purpose of this letter is, firstly, to put you on notice of the Court's user group initiative and, secondly, to seek from you the names of 20 practitioners at a State level whom you believe would make a useful contribution to the proposed user groups. It is envisaged that these practitioners would form the core of the user groups at the local level, and would contribute to the National approach. The Court will ultimately then determine the constitution of each user group.

I look forward to hearing further from you. Of course, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

The Hon Justice John E Middleton
Federal Court of Australia