



SENATOR THE HON GEORGE BRANDIS QC

**ATTORNEY-GENERAL
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS**

MEDIA RELEASE

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER

I am pleased to announce that this morning, the Federal Executive Council appointed Mr Tim Wilson as the Australian Human Rights Commissioner. The position was left in abeyance by the former Labor government and has been entirely unoccupied since July 2012.

Mr Wilson will discharge all of the functions of Human Rights Commissioner, which is the second most senior position within the Australian Human Rights Commission. However, I have asked him in particular to concentrate on the civil liberty and traditional rights and freedoms such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, religious freedom, and freedom of association.

The Human Rights Commission has, in my view, in recent years taken a narrow and selective view of the statutory function and failed to give sufficient attention to freedom as one of the most fundamental human rights.

Mr Wilson, who has long experience and strong credentials as a human rights advocate, and is a well-known defender of freedom through his extensive media appearances and publications in recent years, will bring both commitment and strength to the role.

Australia's sense of itself as a free country has always been at the core of our national identity. I am delighted that Australia's premier human rights body, the Australian Human Rights Commission, will now be joined by a person who has made the defence of freedom his vocation.

Mr Wilson's appointment will be for five years commencing today.

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