LIST G
BARRISTERS

Cathy Dowsett SC



Cathy Dowsett SC practises in employment, discrimination, administrative law and regulatory proceedings.

QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Laws (University of Tasmania)
Bachelor of Arts (University of Tasmania)
Graduate Diploma Legal Practice (ANU)

CORRESPONDENCE

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CHAMBERS

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COMMERCIAL LAW

Contractual Disputes

EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRIAL

Appellate | Confidential Information | Discrimination | Employment Contracts | Public Sector Appeals | Restraint of Trade | Statutory Employment Rights | Workers Compensation

PUBLIC LAW

Administrative Law | Appellate | Civil & Human Rights | Commissions & Inquiries | Discrimination | Judicial Review

Cathy has an appellate and trial practice. She is regularly briefed in employment, equal opportunity and discrimination matters, primarily by employers, in matters arising in both the Federal and State jurisdictions.

Her administrative law practice encompasses judicial review and merits review proceedings, including in relation to commonwealth workers' compensation, veterans' entitlements and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Cathy also has Royal Commission and Board of Inquiry experience. She was one of the counsel assisting the *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability* , and junior counsel for the State of Victoria in the *Board of Inquiry into historical child sexual abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools.*

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards legislation.

Recent Cases

EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL

Manathunge v Cura Newco 1 Pty Ltd (current proceeding), claim alleging contraventions of s 340 and s 351 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

Shafik-Eid v Grounded Fleet Hire Staff Pty Ltd, claimed contraventions of s 340 and s 351 of the *Fair Work Act 200* (Cth) (matter resolved without proceeding to hearing)

Gender-based undervaluation – priority awards review – Health Professional and Support Services Award 2020 [2025] FWCFB 297

Wilson v Australian Federal Police (on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia) [2024] FWC 18 application for unfair dismissal remedy (whether mandatory vaccination policy was lawful)

Ling Zhuang v Fei Ren and Ors, claim alleging contraventions of s 340 and other provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) (matter resolved without proceeding to hearing)

Fair Work Ombudsman v Melotte and another [2024] FedCFamC2G 1318, penalties for contraventions of s 44(1) and s 45 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

Fair Work Ombudsman v E-Agri Management and Technical Services Pty Ltd [2023] FedCFamC2G 1029, penalty for failure to comply with a Compliance Notice

Baker v Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [2022] FedCFamC2G 1055, claimed contraventions of s 351 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) on the grounds of physical or mental disability, political opinion or age

Fair Work Ombudsman v The Pagoda Tree (Vic) Pty Ltd [2022] FedCFamC2G 182, penalties contraventions of s 44, s 45 and other provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) and s 72 and s 80 of the *Paid Parental Leave Act 2010* (Cth)

Fair Work Ombudsman v China Bar Buffett (Epping) Pty Ltd and Others [2021] FCCA 1430, penalties for contraventions of s 44, s 45 and other provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

Fair Work Ombudsman v United Petroleum Pty Ltd [2020] FCA 590, validity of a notice issued under s 712(1) of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

Fair Work Ombudsman v QHA Foods Pty Ltd and Ors [20119] FCCA 3129, penalties for contraventions of s 45, s 351 and s 536 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

CPSU, The Community and Public Sector Union v Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department of Home Affairs) [2019] FCA 975, whether s 470 and 471 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) required the employer not to pay or reduce payments of "sea-going allowances" during time that the employees took protected industrial action

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

Spaleta v Secretary, Department of Social Services [2026] FCAFC 5, appeal concerning the proper construction and application of the *Social Security (Tables for the Assessment of Work-related Impairment for Disability Support Pension) Determination 2011* (Cth)

Commissioner of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission v Lifestyle Solutions (Aust) Ltd (Hakone House Proceeding) [2025] FCA 1393, contraventions of s 73V(3) of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (Cth)

Smith v Repatriation Commission [2025] FCA 1223, appeal on a question of law regarding a claim for a pension under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (Cth)

Ross v Commonwealth of Australia [2022] VSC 779, preliminary hearing regarding the effect of s 389 of the *Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (Cth) and the *Limitation of Actions Act 1958* (Vic) on an application for damages against the Commonwealth in respect of a service injury

Ellison v Comcare [2022] FCA 95, appeal on a question of law regarding the jurisdiction of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to consider issues raised on the material before it.

Association of Employees with a Disability v Commonwealth of Australia [2021] FCAFC 36, judicial review of decisions of the Fair Work Commission

Gadzikwa v Comcare [2020] FCA 1560, appeal from an interlocutory decision upholding an objection to competency

Comcare v Kemp [2020] FCA 865, appeal on a question of law as to whether the claim was governed by the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Other Legislation Amendment Act 2001* (Cth)

DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Bashour v Australian New Zealand Banking Group Ltd and others (current proceeding) application for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal regarding VCAT's order dismissing the application; [2024] VCAT 1197, claims of unlawful discrimination in the grounds of disability and pregnancy, failure to make reasonable adjustments and victimisation; [2022] VSC 252, appeal against discovery orders; [2020] VSC 748, appeal against discovery orders

Waters and others v Hoyts Corporation (current proceeding), claim of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments

OWQ v Taskforce Community Agency Inc [2025] VCAT 1043, claim of sexual harassment and victimisation

IXY (obo NXT), MFY (obo YVG), PTB (obo SWT), IBW (obo LJV), HXW (obo MJN), HHQ (obo QPO) and JLO (obo ZFJ) v State of Victoria (Department of Education) and another, claims of unlawful discrimination in education (resolved without proceeding to hearing)

JYR and others v State of Victoria (Department of Education) , claims of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race and victimisation (matter resolved without proceeding to hearing)

ROYAL COMMISSIONS AND INQUIRIES

Inquiry into Historical Child Sexual Abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools (2023, junior counsel for the State of Victoria)

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (2021 – 2023, junior counsel assisting)

Memberships

Victorian Bar – Commercial Bar Association

Victorian Bar – Industrial Bar Association

Australian Dispute Resolution Advisory Council

Funds in Court Service Advisory Committee