

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday 6 May 2016

**LWB welcomes appointments to the Australian Human Rights Commission**

The office of the Federal Attorney General office has announced three new appointments to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Mr Alastair McEwin as Disability Discrimination Commissioner, the Hon Dr Kay Patterson as Age Discrimination Commissioner, and Mr Edward Santow as Human Rights Commissioner.

The office of the Attorney General said these appointments will be for five years and ensure that the Australian Human Rights Commission has its full complement of Commissioners.

Former Disability Discrimination Commissioner and Life Without Barriers Board member Graeme Innes described the appointment of Alastair McEwin as “excellent”.

“My warmest congratulations to Alastair as the new Disability Discrimination Commissioner. He’s very well qualified for the role.”

“As well as his role as Chairman of the [Deaf Society](#), Mr McEwin is the Chairman of the Disability Council of NSW.”

“He is a great advocate, very strategic, has lived experience of disability and has been involved in the sector for many years,” Mr Innes said.

Having previously held the position, Mr Innes described the decision as outstanding.

“Forty per cent of complaints lodged with the commission relate to disability, so the appointment is very important,” Mr Innes said. “People with disability are 30 per cent less employed, and have half the HSC pass rate and 45 per cent live in or near poverty. To have a spokesperson at the commission is absolutely critical.”

“Further, it will be very valuable to have an independent human rights voice to comment as the NDIS rolls out,” he added.

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