



## Mills Oakley strengthens Canberra dispute resolution practice

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Leading independent law firm Mills Oakley has added to its commercial litigation capability with the hire of partner **Bernice Ellis** from Meyer Vandenberg in Canberra.

Ms Ellis is an experienced commercial litigator specialising in all aspects of insolvency, debt recovery, tax controversy and compulsory land acquisition. She also has substantial experience in areas such as defamation, professional negligence, shareholder and partnership disputes and building and construction disputes.

Prior to entering legal practice, Bernice practised as a tax advisor for over a decade at the ATO, EY and Raytheon Australia. She is one of a number of recent partner hires who have enhanced Mills Oakley's taxation offering, with other examples including disputes partner Ashley Tiplady in Brisbane and taxation partner Marina Raulings in Melbourne.

Commenting on this hire, Mills Oakley CEO John Nerurker said that the firm greatly valued Bernice's strong local reputation:

"While other national firms have downgraded their Canberra offices to 'fly in, fly out' status, Mills Oakley is committed to hiring talent with a genuine connection to our nation's capital. As someone who has spent all her professional career in the Canberra market and is well known and respected by clients, Bernice will help us fulfil our mission of building a full service offering in Canberra," he said.

Bernice added that she was attracted by the firm's capacity to articulate a clear vision for the future:

"I'm delighted to be joining such a talented partner group, which has a real sense of clarity about where they want the firm to be in the next five years and how they are going to get there," she said. "I'm also excited about my clients having access to the exceptional depth and breadth of legal expertise across the firm and the benefit of the strong Mills Oakley brand."

Bernice acts for a wide range of private clients, including company directors, insolvency practitioners, secured and unsecured creditors and debtors. With her background in finance and commerce, Bernice has a keen understanding of the key drivers in business and works to achieve early resolution of disputes, without protracted and expensive legal action.

Bernice commenced with the firm last week.

### Media Contact

Renu Prasad

Communications Manager

T: +61 2 8289 5820

E: [rprasad@millsoakley.com.au](mailto:rprasad@millsoakley.com.au)