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APPEARING IN THE FRENCH COURT
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THE HIGH COURT UNDER CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERT FRENCH
Harry Hobbs, Andrew Lynch and George Williams
On Chief Justice Robert French’s retirement from the High Court of Australia, it is
appropriate to reflect on his impact and legacy. In this article we first revisit the
circumstances of Chief Justice French’s appointment, before offering an overview of the
dynamics of the French Court, noting the patterns of decision-making that emerged
during his tenure. We then examine the French Court’s constitutional law jurisprudence,
focusing on the three dominant and most contentious areas of its activity: cases on the executive power of the Commonwealth; the Ch III restrictions on State legislative power; and the legal problems raised by Australia’s asylum seeker policies.

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