Heydon no longer a barrister, amid allegation he ‘used his public standing’ to lure woman

By Jacqueline Maley and Kate McClymont
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Former High Court judge Dyson Heydon is no longer practising as a barrister, it emerged on Wednesday, as a fresh allegation came to light he "used his public
standing on the High Court" to lure a woman into a position where he could make advances on her.

In a separate development, police said they had begun investigations on other allegations of inappropriate conduct that may amount to indecent assault.

Former High Court justice Dyson Heydon, pictured in 2015.  ANNA KUCERA

According to the NSW Bar Association, "Dyson Heydon does not hold a 2020-21 practising certificate." NSW barristers' practising certificates expire each year on June 30 and they are required to renew their credentials by July 1.

Mr Heydon's decision not to renew his practising certificate comes as ACT police chief Neil Gaughan confirmed that the High Court has been contacted regarding allegations of sexual harassment levelled against Mr Heydon by six former associates.

"I am also in consultation with the national side of the AFP because there's a possibility if there has been any assault or anything like that – and again it's a possibility, no claims have been made at this stage – it's possible it could be other jurisdictions outside the ACT," Mr Gaughan said.

The Herald has previously revealed that several women, including a judge and Noor Blumer, the former president of the ACT Law Society, have made allegations which suggest Mr Heydon's actions amounted to an indecent assault.

Mr Heydon, via lawyers, has denied "emphatically any allegation of sexual harassment or any offence." He also categorically denied "any allegation of predatory behaviour or breaches of the law."

Last week Mr Heydon's name was removed from the list of barristers who have
chambers at the ritzy Eight Selborne chambers on Sydney's Phillip Street.

On Wednesday Mr Heydon, who has been associated with the chambers since the 1980s, was spotted walking with an armful of files along nearby Macquarie Street.

Eight Selborne did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Attorney-General Christian Porter has called for his department to "investigate" allegations made against Mr Heydon while he was head of the Royal Commission.

These developments came as an Australian-born international human rights lawyer made another allegation against Mr Heydon.

The judge's approach allegedly involved an invitation on High Court stationery and champagne in his chambers, continuing a pattern described by other women who have made allegations against Mr Heydon.

"This was not just opportunistic behaviour. It was calculated behaviour. He used not only his public standing on the court, he really abused his position of trust," said Dr Alice Edwards.

Dr Edwards met Mr Heydon in February 2008 when he was a High Court judge, and travelled with his wife to the University of Nottingham to give a guest lecture.

At a dinner in his honour Mr Heydon told university lecturer Dr Edwards "he would be delighted to show me the court when I was next in Canberra", she said.
In late March 2008, Dr Edwards flew to Canberra to work on her PhD on violence against women under international human rights law.

She contacted Mr Heydon and following a personal tour of the High Court, he asked her to dinner at the Commonwealth Club, the private members' club where he stayed while in Canberra.

"There were two things going on in my mind - first, how great that he was interested in promoting and supporting bright Australian women lawyers," Dr Edwards says.

"The second was – this is not unusual, to have meals with colleagues. Men do it all the time."

Before dinner, Mr Heydon suggested Dr Edwards join him for a drink in his chambers, where he opened a bottle of champagne.

"I had one glass and he drank the rest of the bottle," she says.

"My radar was up but I had already accepted the invitation to dinner."

Following dinner, Mr Heydon asked Dr Edwards if she would like a nightcap in his room, and started to usher her up the stairs, she says.

"He is a very big man. I remember taking a couple of steps up the staircase. It happened pretty fast. Then I repeated my request for a taxi."

Mr Heydon stood with her as she waited for the taxi, Dr Edwards said, and "continued to insist he should come back with me in the taxi, because taxi drivers in Canberra were dangerous men".

"When the taxi arrived he put his arm around me so my right shoulder was in him... he kissed my forehead and he asked me when he could see me again."

Dr Edwards is now the head of an international anti-torture organisation based in Geneva.

"Men in powerful positions have responsibilities and as a leader in our justice system, he had more responsibilities than others," she said.
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