

Anne Petterd

Partner at Baker McKenzie

Dominic Keenan, Lawyer at Allens, sits down with **Anne Petterd**, Partner at Baker McKenzie, to discuss Anne's career and International Women's Day.

Anne is a partner in the technology team at Baker McKenzie Sydney. She is currently the Chair of the firm's APAC International Commercial and Trade practice group. Showing excellent timing for once, Anne returned to Sydney in February 2019 after having worked in the Baker McKenzie Singapore office for 3 years, focusing on ASEAN tech projects. Her plans to be back in Singapore every 4 weeks or so, have not quite eventuated so far, so like everyone else, zoom and other platforms have been the main way of keeping connected with clients and colleagues in the past year.

DOMINIC KEENAN: What does a typical day look like for you?

ANNE PETTERD: Much of my work is with businesses outside Australia, so the start of the day is going through the overnight emails and crossing fingers that my plans for the day have not been turned upside down by a data breach or an urgent project. There's usually a bit of triage working out what needs to be actioned straight-away and whether we need to try to catch someone in another timezone before they log off for the day.

My work is a mixture of long running tech projects and advisory work around tech product reviews and data breaches, so the rest of the day is spent progressing these. Like most lawyers, more often than not, something urgent pops up, so flexibility is key.

I have a few responsibilities for various firm APAC and global initiatives so, in addition to the client work, each day there are usually a couple of planning calls or steering committee meetings. Some of these are a little late in the day - joys of a truly global law firm!

KEENAN: What recent events in the legal landscape most affect your organisation/role?

PETTERD: A focus for me is what's happening with global trade issues impacting tech products and tech R&D. Issues around COVID and trade tensions have manifested into supply chain disruption issues

for our clients. We've needed to track the issues and develop solutions to support clients with a vast array of issues.

KEENAN: Are there any law reforms in your sector that you think are desperately needed? If so, what are they?

PETTERD:

not call out any particular reform as desperately needed. However, one of the biggest challenges for governments in making laws in recent years has been making effective laws that are not unintentionally disruptive to new technology and technology-based business models. For example, some of the changes to telecommunications laws over the past few years have raised questions and uncertainty about who is intended to be regulated. I don't have a magic solution to future proofing new laws for technology developments - but perhaps a bit more workshopping for unintended consequences would assist.

KEENAN: Who is one woman in the industry whom you really admire, and why?

PETTERD: This is actually a really hard question. I'm very pleased to say there are lots of female colleagues I admire. I know lots of inspirational women who are leaders in their field. But, the women I work with that I particularly admire are those that



somehow, despite ridiculously busy schedules, find some time to check colleagues are OK, do something thoughtful and provide support. Random acts of kindness to help people get through the day cannot be overstated.

KEENAN: What is the best work-related advice you've ever received?

PETTERD: I was very lucky to receive lots of great tips when I first started work. The most memorable tip I can remember receiving was to speak up when I didn't understand something. In context, in a meeting a client asked me what I thought about what the other side had just proposed. I'd only been a lawyer I think for 3 weeks. I had not followed a word of what the other side said. So I said to the client I was sorry but I wasn't quite following the conversation. To my relief the exact point the client wanted to make was that the other side's proposal was nonsensical. Whew!