



SIMON MORRISON

By Adam Tayler

Simon Morrison is the new president of the Alliance, taking over the reins from Richard Faulks.

Simon is a partner at Shine Lawyers, based in Brisbane. He has been with Shine for the last 18 years.

Born and raised in Toowoomba, Simon started his relationship with his current firm in 1988 and developed a passion for the law and, in particular, matters involving workers' compensation. He has worked at Toowoomba, Warwick, Chinchilla and now Brisbane.

A particularly astute negotiator, Simon enjoys the back-and-forth thrust and parry of litigation and has seen a lot of defendant lawyers come and go. His favourite style of defendant lawyer is one who '...beats their chest and shows their hand'.

In the workers' compensation field, Simon is recognised as an industry leader and, more recently, has gained a national profile after testifying before parliamentary inquiries and contributing to the Alliance's submissions to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into a national workers' compensation scheme.

However, Simon's career has not been limited to one area of the law. He has been involved in a lot of memorable cases over the years, recalling most vividly the ground-breaking nature of the Brisbane Grammar sexual abuse litigation for the horrendous nature of the abuse involved, the challenges facing the litigation, as well as the good outcome that was achieved.

Simon's most memorable client was a victim of abuse at Neerkol who had met his challenges head on and overcome

them. "He was an outspoken man and was able to convert his immense anger at his treatment to work now as a powerful lobbyist to Government on any number of key causes," says Simon.

Simon's involvement with the Alliance (then APLA), commenced in 1996. He immediately saw the potential of the organisation and was actively involved with the Queensland State Committee from 1997/98 onwards.

He has been the State SIG chair for workers' compensation since 1998, and the National SIG chair for workers' compensation since 2003.

This involvement has led to many significant results when it comes to the rights of injured workers. It is no coincidence that Queensland retains full access to common law for injured workers.

In 1996, when the Queensland Government introduced the then *Workcover Queensland Act* which significantly affected workers' rights, Simon was at the forefront of a committee to campaign against the Act. That campaign had as its public face, Trevor ('The Axe') Gillmeister of the Brisbane Broncos and Queensland State of Origin fame, and won a powerful and successful outcome for injured workers in Queensland.

Simon was also instrumental in negotiating significant changes to the legislation in 2001 and, in particular, the repeal of draconian liability provisions contained in the Act. Simon and his colleagues on the committee were heavily involved in negotiating the amendments to the legislation.

Another key development during Simon's time as the workers' compensation SIG chair in Queensland was the commencement of protocol meetings with the government majority insurer, which have helped to ensure that members concerned with the operation of the scheme at a practical level have a voice.

As president, Simon has a vision to continue the momentum of the tort reform roll-back campaign which he is passionate about. He is also keen to see the fostering and development of relationships between the Alliance and the key stakeholders in our expanding areas of interest.

Simon is married to Nicole and has two young children, Ella and Molly. He is a keen runner and tennis player. ■

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