

## Marissa Dreher

### MARISSA DREHER – SUPPORTING STATEMENT – 2018



**SIA Member since:** 2010

#### **Professional experience and qualifications:**

**2013 – 2018: Director of Dreher Legal:** a boutique safety law firm based in Melbourne. My primary motivation for founding Dreher Legal was to ensure that all organisations, whether large or small, (and the people within them) have access to quality legal advice and representation for all their safety matters. This has involved working with people from all walks of professional life – from General Managers of Health and Safety in large corporates, to health and safety practitioners starting out, to directors of small family businesses who are genuinely trying to manage safety with limited internal support.

**2004 – 2013: Lawyer in the Herbert Smith Freehills National WH&S team** (incl managing Melbourne WH&S practice). This included developing and maintaining the business plan for the Melbourne Practice, ensuring it was consistent with the overall business strategy of the National Practice, and contributing to the development of the National Practice business plan.

#### Qualifications:

- Bachelor of Laws (Hons) – Monash University
- Bachelor of Music (Hons in Performance) – University of Melbourne.

I have extensive experience advising local, national and international companies on governance and compliance strategies, regularly briefing Boards and senior management on all aspects of WH&S law. I engage with industry in various ways, including directly with various regulators on enforcement policy and regularly with key industry groups on safety and legal policy issues relevant to their members.

#### **Statement of interest:**

Three years ago, I stated that it was important for professionals to have a strong industry body with the depth and breadth of knowledge that could provide broad, relevant and sound assistance to its members, and whose reputation allowed it to be a strong voice for its members to drive broader industry and public policy. This belief was based on my career as a lawyer, where I am fortunate to have such a respected body representing and supporting my profession.

The past three years on the SIA Board has reinforced my view. I have been privileged and proud to be a part of the SIA's journey, and particularly rewarded seeing it transform into an organisation from whose respected views are regularly sought by key industry stakeholders. I believe part of the SIA successes have been as a result of a balanced, yet diverse Board.

In my view, a Board is more efficient and representative of its industry when its members have a variety of skill sets. Good governance comes out of creative, pragmatic and robust discussions from a range of professional and geographical perspectives.

*(Marissa Dreher, page 2)*

During my time on the Board, I have endeavoured to contribute to its decision making by:

- bringing a legal perspective to governance issues and strategic planning, ensuring consistency with the SIA Constitution and compliance within the operating legal framework;
- serving on the Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee where legal skills are vital;
- assisting the Executive on legal matters to reduce SIA's legal spend so funds could be otherwise invested;
- advising the Board on internal governance changes (such as reviewing the proposed draft By-Laws to ensure that they remained consistent with the SIA Constitution);
- providing local knowledge for organisational issues faced by a national organisation where its Head Office is based in Melbourne.

I still hold the same keen enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the SIA's vision and mission as I did three years ago. I believe that I can continue to bring a legal perspective to Board deliberations, while also providing stability and continuity as a second term Board Member.

I therefore humbly seek re-nomination and sincerely hope to continue to 'put back' into such a vital industry.