

CEREMONIAL WELCOME Deputy President Theresa Moltoni OAM Brisbane, 13 May 2022

Delivered by AREEA Chief Executive, Steve Knott AM

It gives me great pleasure to both attend and address this ceremonial sitting of the Fair Work Commission, on behalf of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Australian Resources and Energy Employer Association (AREEA) to welcome new Deputy President Theresa Moltoni OAM.

Clearly appointments to important institutions, such as the Fair Work Commission – whose work is critical to Australian businesses, the economy and wellbeing of millions of our citizens – should be high calibre appointees.

Having known and worked with Deputy President Moltoni for some considerable time now I can personally attest Theresa meets and exceeds this high benchmark.

Theresa, you bring to the Commission more than 25 years of professional dedication, having worked tirelessly as a business manager, people leader, entrepreneur and legal practitioner across multiple industry sectors.

Underneath Oxford Dictionary's definition of "Overachiever", you may very well find a smiling picture of Deputy President Moltoni, such is the wide array of business and legal achievements you have to your name.

I will do my best to briefly outline the range of endeavours that has led the Deputy President to this Commission.

Business Management Experience

Firstly, as referenced, you bring to the Commission many years as an experienced business manager and executive leader.

You worked for four years as HR/IR Director and then CEO at WorkPac – an AREEA member company that today provides high paid employment for more than 12,000 people in the mining and resources sector.

Your experience leading a large business in this highly competitive and innovative industry will be of exceptional value to the FWC.

You also spent four years as Global Head of Human Resources for Super Retail Group – one of Brisbane's family business success stories and today a top ASX-listed retailer.

In this role, you held a critically influential executive leadership position within a national business that was growing, diversifying and acquiring assets at a rapid pace.

You further bring 11 years with one of Australia's iconic brands in Telstra, including as Queensland State Human Resources Manager.

Board Directorships

Clearly, the diversity of your business experience across many sectors, has been well noted by other corporate leaders, resulting in your appointment to various boards.

Your directorship roles include both business leadership and philanthropic endeavours.

On the former, you have helped steer the direction of Australia's largest superannuation fund, Australian Super, as a member of its Queensland Advisory Board. Prior to that you were a board director at Sun Super.

You were President of the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry for three years and a non-executive director for over four years.

The second female President in 118 years at the Brisbane Club, which ranks in the top 100 clubs of the world, where you served seven years on the Brisbane Club board.

In philanthropy, you contributed over three years of your time as a Board Director of the PA Research Foundation, which supports ground-breaking medical research including the discovery of the world's first cancer vaccine, improved patient care and ultimately saving lives.

Almost 10 years ago you founded Dancing CEOs, a fantastic corporate fundraising initiative supporting Women's Legal Service Queensland in its mission to help women and children suffering or at risk of family and domestic violence.

Theresa, clearly you have managed, extremely effectively, to balance your talents for business and people leadership with your personal passions and drive to give back to the community.

IR / Legal Practice

And this brings us to the area that in part brings you here today, industrial relations and employment law.

Amongst your impressive earlier career highlights, you spent three years as regional manager at Queensland's former Office of the Employment Advocate.

Nine years later, after some of the aforementioned corporate roles, you founded Brisbane consultancy firm IRIQ, with the focus of providing highly practical industrial relations advice to businesses of all shapes and sizes.

In these years not only did you build this business from the ground up - employing and mentoring a talented team, and building innovative training and balloting products - you did so whilst managing highly complex industrial relations matters for your clients and sharing your knowledge and advice at industry events around the country.

In 2017, IRIQ became an incorporated legal practice, and you expanded your services to include employment law, commercial litigation, human rights, anti-discrimination and much more.

The founding of IRIQ Law coincided with completion of your legal qualifications and admission to the Supreme Court of Queensland in May 2017. Later, to the High Court of Australia in January 2018. And in addition a post law Graduate Certificate in Litigation through the College of Law - almost completing your masters.

This would be quite an achievement for anyone, coming a little later in life, but is especially impressive in your case, given the time pressures of running a successful business and your involvement in various other causes and interests.

It is also impressive that you were publicly recognised for your service to Industrial Relations in the 2016 Queens Birthday Honours, being awarded an OAM.

This rare honour may have been enough for some, an indicator that you had already achieved so much in your career.

However, for you Theresa this recognition seemingly only added further fuel to the fire of your ambition, preceding your admission to law and founding of your legal firm.

Contribution to the IR Community

It is well noted that you also have a passion for sharing your love and interest in industrial relations with other like-minded individuals.

In 2012 you founded the well-respected Workplace Relations Interest Group at The Brisbane Club. An interest group you chaired until your appointment to this Commission. You also co-founded and chaired the Club's Legal Interest Group in 2016.

You chaired the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Workplace Relations Policy Council for over two years.

During this time, you worked with government and unions on the implementation of the Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work* recommendations as a member of the tripartite steering committee.

In this role, you combined your passions for best practice business management and support for gendered violence victims, to ensure workplace sexual harassment could be prevented and dealt with practically and effectively in all Australian businesses.

You also participated as a member of the Australian Delegation at the United Nations annual ILO convention, including in a review of the ILO's work to support collective bargaining and the social dialogue.

Mr Barklamb has asked that I pass on the particular appreciation of ACCI's staff for your unfailing support for their work during this time, and for going above and beyond as both a member and committee leader.

Conclusion

As I conclude my remarks, there is one job of Deputy President Moltoni's that I have not yet mentioned – the most difficult and important of all - and that is mother to three children and grandmother to one.

Deputy President, given all you have achieved in your career to date, and with this latest appointment, you are not only an inspiration to your children but to all working mothers who feel they can and should strive to follow all their passions and reach all their ambitions – be they across family, work, community and education.

Deputy President Moltoni, congratulations on your achievements to date and your appointment to the Fair Work Commission.

Again, your appointment ticks every box one could think of. On behalf of ACCI and AREEA, I wish you all the best in what will surely be along and rewarding career with the federal industrial umpire.

Thank you.