



CommBar Executive Committee Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Date: 19 November 2019

Venue: Bar Council Chambers

Commencement: 4.30 PM

Chairperson: The meeting was chaired by the President of CommBar, Nick Hopkins QC for the delivery of the President's Report; thereafter the meeting was chaired by the President elect.

Attendance: A quorum of CommBar members was present

Nick Hopkins QC, Stewart Maiden QC, Paul Hayes QC, Claire Harris QC, Oren Bigos SC, Sam Rosewarne, Meg O'Sullivan, Dr Elizabeth Boros, Hamish Redd, Kieran Hickie, Georgia Berlic, Raini Zambelli, Sam Hay.

Apologies: Gabi Crafti, Richard Edmunds, Robert Shepherd, James Caitlin.

1. Minutes of the 2018 AGM of CommBar

The President confirmed that the minutes of the previous AGM held on 26 November 2018 were circulated with notice of the AGM. As there were no queries or other matters raised the President proposed that the minutes of the last AGM be confirmed and called for a proposer and seconder.

The motion was proposed and seconded and the Minutes of the AGM held on 26 November 2018 confirmed.

2. Terms Expiring – Ordinary Members of Executive

The President noted that, as advised by email to members on 22 October 2018, the terms of the following ordinary members of the Executive Committee have expired in accordance with the CommBar Rules:

- Dr Elizabeth Boros, Member of the Executive

- Gabi Crafti, Member of the Executive
- Meg O’Sullivan, Member of the Executive
- Luke Merrick, Member of the Executive

The President thanked those members for long service and announced that there had been 9 candidates for those vacant positions.

3. Office Bearer

The President noted that the office bearer positions of the executive committee were to be filled by the following members:

- President - Claire Harris QC
- Senior Vice President – Paul Hayes QC
- Junior Vice President – Casual Vacancy
- Treasurer – Stewart Maiden QC retiring, casual vacancy

4. Honorary Positions

The President thanked both the Honorary Secretary Kieran Hickie and the Assistant Honorary Secretary Georgia Berlic for their efforts in those roles.

The President also thanked Daniel Lorbeer for his ongoing work on the CommBar Matters blog and assistance with the President’s quarterly emails.

5. President’s Report

The President reiterated his thanks to the committee and proceeded to give the President’s report.

CommBar report

CommBar has more than 600 members with an interest in commercial law, most of whom are practising barristers. It incorporates twenty separate specialist sections with the addition of the Media Law Section in 2019. Information regarding each section, including its Chair and members, is available on CommBar section of the VicBar website: www.vicbar.com.au.

As is always the case the 2018 – 2019 year has been a busy one for CommBar. It prioritises active engagement with other sections of the Bar, the broader profession, the courts, universities, the judiciary, and other important stakeholders.

The activities of CommBar during the year to November 2019 have reflected its purposes, which include to provide a forum for interaction and engagement between

barristers with an interest in commercial law; to contribute to the development of policy and practice in the sphere of commercial law; to liaise with the courts, government, authorities and other stakeholders; to represent members on matters of concern, including by way of engagement with VicBar; to encourage the participation of members in continuing legal education and conferences which may further their knowledge and understanding of commercial law.

To this end, CommBar's activities have included:

- *Establishing Media Law Section of CommBar, with Dr Matthew Collins QC as inaugural Head of the Section*
- *Setting up and administering the Alan Goldberg Bursary – two recipients in 2019, being Scott Cromb and Kylie Jeans*
- *Engaging with Bar Council in relation to promotion of direct briefing, including sponsoring, speaking at and attending numerous conferences at which Corporate Counsel were in attendance (General Counsel Summit, ACC National Conference, AILA National Conference, BFSLA Conference)*
- *Undertaking numerous CPDs, including with Hong Kong conference sponsors Korda Mentha*
- *Consulting and having input into various studies, including in respect of renewal of County Court Facility and Clerking System Review*
- *Conducting functions such as the CommBar end of year drinks last year co-hosted by the Chief Justices of the Federal and Supreme Courts. Moving that function to a 'commencement of year' function with a refresh of the invitation list*
- *Planning for the next CommBar Conference in Penang, Malaysia*
- *Preparing and delivering submissions to VLRC on Contempt of Court*
- *Engaging with University Law Schools and the courts with respect to the hosting of joint seminar programs, as well as overseeing the CommBar CPD program*
- *Negotiating for the benefit of members continued subscription to Lexology, and electronic hub for legal articles, updates and analysis*
- *Sponsoring various events and organisations including the Junior Bar Speaking Competition and Austlii*

- *Publishing CommBar’s Blog “CommBar Matters”, and, on a quarterly basis, the CommBar Newsletter. Distributing numerous ad hoc emails on topics of interest to members*

6. Results of Voting

Following the delivery of the President’s report, the outgoing President Nick Hopkins QC handed over the conduct of the AGM to the President elect Claire Harris QC (hereafter referred to as the President).

The President announced the results of the electronic voting for the vacancies of the CommBar Executive. The following members were elected:

- Oren Bigos QC
- Hamish Redd
- Kieran Hickie
- Jesse Rudd
- Georgia Berlic

The President congratulated the successful candidates and thanked the retiring and outgoing members for their service.

7. Treasurers Report

The retiring Treasurer, Stewart Maiden QC proceeded to give the Treasurer’s Report.

1. *I am pleased to provide this short Treasurer’s Report to the CommBar AGM.*

Membership

2. *At the date of this report, Commbar has:*
 - (a) *616 financial members;*
 - (b) *11 unfinancial members; and*
 - (c) *106 non-charged members (comprising current readers, judicial officers and miscellaneous others).*

3. *Membership fees remain unchanged at \$95 per year.*

Finances

4. *I have attached:*
 - (a) *A balance sheet current to date.*

- (b) *A profit and loss statement for the period from 23 November 2018 (the date of the last AGM) to date.*
 - (c) *A profit and loss statement for the 2018 – 2019 financial year.*
- 5. *Commbar retains a very sound cash position, with credit balances in its bank accounts totalling \$175,420.28 as at 19 November 2018. The Victorian Bar holds \$2,085 in subscription revenue for Commbar, which Commbar can expect to receive shortly.*
- 6. *Our revenue continues to exceed our expenses, although the introduction of the Goldberg Bursary is now making good use of some of the surplus that we have previously recorded. We are still operating with a healthy excess of income over expenses.*
- 7. *This year expenses broke down slightly differently than usually. Since the last AGM, our most significant expenses have been two Goldberg Bursaries, the Lexology subscription, advance payments toward the Penang 2020 conference, joint sponsorship (with the Victorian Bar) of the General Counsel Summit, and a donation to Austlii. Other expenses include the usual section expenses on CPDs and functions.*
- 8. *While the use of section allowances is better this year than it was last year, the majority of sections continue not to use their \$500 entitlements. I can only repeat the encouragement to use those entitlements that I gave sections this time last year.*
- 9. *I would be happy to take any questions at the meeting.*

8. General Business

There was no General Business.

9. Close Meeting

The meeting closed at 5.15 pm.