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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL

**PRESIDENT JENNINGS
DEPUTY PRESIDENT CALLIGEROS
DEPUTY PRESIDENT DOLPHIN
JUDGE McCUSKER
JUDGE FARRELL
JUDGE GILCHRIST
JUDGE HANNON
DEPUTY PRESIDENT LIESCHKE
ACTING DEPUTY PRESIDENT ARDLIE**

**SPECIAL SITTING OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYMENT
TRIBUNAL (SAET)**

Adelaide

9.05 AM, WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2015

**THE HON. JOHN RAU, MP, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
MR TONY ROSSI, CHAIR, ACCIDENT COMPENSATION
COMMITTEE, LAW SOCIETY OF SA
MR NIGEL McBRIDE, CEO, BUSINESS SA
MR JOE SZAKACS, SA UNIONS**

REGISTRAR: All stand. This is a special sitting of the South Australian Employment Tribunal and the Workers Compensation Tribunal to celebrate the commencement of the South Australian Employment Tribunal. The occasion also marks the appointments of Mark Calligeros and Steven
5 Dolphin as Deputy Presidents of the tribunals. Please be seated.

JENNINGS P: Minister, Mr McBride, Mr Rossi, Mr Szakacs, ladies and gentlemen, this is a special sitting to mark the commencement of the South Australian Employment Tribunal and to acknowledge the Workers
10 Compensation Tribunal.

We also note the appointment of Mark Calligeros, to my right, and Steven Dolphin, to my left, as Deputy Presidents of the tribunals, and I welcome them to the bench. We also note the appointment of the conciliation officers
15 as members of the South Australian Employment Tribunal.

The occasion of this special sitting celebrates the commencement today of the South Australian Employment Tribunal and its jurisdiction under the Return To Work Act, and acknowledges the work of the Workers
20 Compensation Tribunal since its establishment in 1996, as the creation of the new tribunal will lead to the conclusion of the former tribunal. I have the honour today to present to you members of both tribunals.

I now call on the Minister for Industrial Relations to address the bench.
25

MR RAU: May it please the tribunal, I rise to acknowledge the inaugural sitting of the South Australian Employment Tribunal and the appointments of Deputy President Mark Calligeros and Deputy President Steven Dolphin.

30 Today's ceremonial inaugural sitting of the new South Australian Employment Tribunal is an important occasion for South Australian workers, employers, and those insurers charged with the responsibility of returning injured workers to work. It marks the commencement of the new Return to Work Scheme, providing better recovery and return-to-work services for
35 South Australians who are injured at work.

I think it's appropriate to use this occasion of the special sitting of the South Australian Employment Tribunal to acknowledge the work of the Workers Compensation Tribunal, as the creation of the new tribunal denotes the
40 beginning of the end of the former tribunal. In light of this, I acknowledge the bench today as representative of both tribunals in honouring this occasion.

45 Already Return To Work SA is delivering great success. Structural changes made to the former WorkCover Scheme in 2013; the passage of the Return To Work Act in 2014 and improved claims management have seen the

unfunded liability completely wiped out and the average premium rate drop to below 2 per cent.

5 The passage of the South Australian Employment Tribunal Act 2014 providing for the establishment of this tribunal is the next step in the government's return-to-work reform, which will deliver further positive outcomes for injured workers and employers.

10 The South Australian Employment Tribunal is an integral part of this new scheme, replacing the Workers Compensation Tribunal as the principal forum for the resolution of return-to-work disputes. The new SAET will provide efficient and cost-effective processes for all parties involved. It will act with as little formality and technicality as possible.

15 It will be accessible and flexible in the way it conducts its business with a focus on mediation and conciliation to resolve disputes wherever appropriate. The new tribunal website, for those of you who have your pencils ready - www.saet.sa.gov.au - is now available, providing online access to information about the SAET dispute resolution processes and featuring a new
20 online application lodgement function to streamline the system.

I commend the new tribunal for your commitment to carrying these reforms forward and delivering the just, timely and efficient resolution of return-to-work matters that are brought here. Can I also acknowledge the
25 great work done by the Attorney-General's Department in relation to this as well.

30 Today's special sitting also provides the appropriate occasion to formally acknowledge the appointment of two new Deputy Presidents to assist the tribunal Senior Judge President Jennings; Deputy President Mark Calligeros and Deputy President Steven Dolphin.

35 I have been advised that since the announcement of your appointments you have both worked enthusiastically and tirelessly, especially on rules I understand - you've done a great job - to set up the new tribunal and ensure that its practices, policies and processes were established in time for today's commencement of the Return To Work Act.

40 Both of you have extensive experience in the area of Industrial Relations and Workers Compensation; a combined total of 45 years in the field. Deputy President Calligeros, prior to joining the South Australian Employment Tribunal, you were a partner at Minter Ellison Lawyers, and have conducted workers compensation litigation since commencing practising 29 years - surely that can't be right, but that's what it says here - as solicitor and counsel.
45

You have conducted matters before the Industrial Relations Court of South Australia, the Workers Compensation Tribunal, the District Court and the

Supreme Court of South Australia, and the High Court. You have also provided advice to government in relation to workers compensation issues over a period of about 15 years. This includes advice about managing the long-term government workers compensation claims, and more recently in relation to the Return To Work Act. Notably, you've been intimately involved with the major cases which have tested amendments to the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act passed in 2008.

Deputy President, your talents extend beyond the courtroom. Your love of music sees you playing with various ensembles, in particular playing bass guitar with - I'm sure I've got this right - Pistol Pete and the Hot Rods, a rock-and-roll band that still gets a gig or two around town.

Deputy President Dolphin, you too have made your mark in the industrial and workers compensation area as a solicitor and barrister in many courts; predominantly Workers Compensation Tribunal, Industrial Relations Court, Industrial Relations Commission, Federal Court and Fair Work Commission.

You were admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of South Australia and the High Court of Australia in the year 2000 when you were with Palios Meegan and Nicholson, and have been principal at Lieschke and Weatherill Lawyers since 2005, having joined them in 2002.

You have also served as chair of the Industrial Relations Committee of the Law Society of South Australia; you've been a member of the Workers Compensation Executive of the Law Society of South Australia, and a member of the Young Lawyers Support Group of the Law Society of South Australia. It has been noted that you performed well in the media. You were noticed in the Ark Tribe matter, and took the opportunity to front the media over the 2008 workers compensation amendments.

You've also made a name for yourself as a winemaker. Under the name of Stefano Delfino, you have had success in a local wine competition. This is a passion you share with your father-in-law, making some wines together, each to their own blend and competing against each other.

Deputy Presidents Calligeros and Dolphin, I congratulate you both on your appointments, and I am confident that you will both continue to serve the tribunal to the highest of standards. On behalf of the government and all of South Australia, I commend you all to achieve the great things for which the new South Australian Employment Tribunal has been established.

If the tribunal pleases.

JENNINGS P: Thank you, Minister. Mr Rossi.

MR ROSSI: If the tribunal pleases, it is both an honour and a pleasure to appear at this inaugural sitting of the South Australian Employment Tribunal on behalf of the Law Society of South Australia. On behalf of the members of the society and the legal profession generally, I extend every best wish to the members of the Workers Compensation Tribunal and the South Australian Employment Tribunal. The support staff in the registry and the judicial support assistance provide not only administrative support to the deputy presidents, but are also an important conduit between the members of the society and the members of the tribunal.

We look forward to working together with the SAET under the new legislation, regulations and rules which will be applied initially to the South Australian workers compensation regime.

To get the best out of our system takes good will and cooperation between all parties, and members of the Law Society are keen to work efficiently and effectively with all stakeholders and the members of the tribunal in the best interests of those who come before the tribunal.

Indeed, cooperation has already been evident during the consultation and development stages of the new regime. In its negotiations and responses to the consultations on that legislation, regulations and rules, the society has as always maintained an emphasis on the principles of the rule of law; an achievable but legally structured system; the rights of those who appear before the tribunal, and just compensation outcomes in an area where particular interests may be advanced. We seek to take a balanced approach without taking sides.

I congratulate the Minister for Industrial Relations, Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, the Honourable John Rau, for his work in reforming workers compensation. There are competing interests and viewpoints that would have made it quite a task.

Minister, your background experience in this area of the law, as well as your role as Attorney-General, has been of great benefit, as it has been clear for the understanding of the working of the system and the sometimes complex legal concepts has been integral to the reform.

I also express the society's gratitude to Return To Work SA, and particularly Mr McCarthy, Mr Cordiner and Mr Francis, who have diligently and effectively outlined the manner in which the new processes will operate. I thank them for their cooperative approach and their delivery of information sessions, specifically for members of the society.

Whilst acknowledging the importance of cooperation between various stakeholders and the tribunal, it is vital that at all times we're also mindful of

the importance of the independence of the tribunal from the parties, stakeholders, the parliament and the executive government.

5 The government and the parliament are to be commended for the broad functions of the president in the administration of the tribunal, and the clear statement in the Act that the role is to be free from external direction or control.

10 It is also my great pleasure on behalf of the members of the society to congratulate Calligeros and Dolphin DP upon their appointment to both the Workers Compensation Tribunal and the South Australian Employment Tribunal. Both are experienced legal practitioners in the areas of industrial relations and workers compensation who are well-known to the Society. We welcome them to their new positions.

15 At these ceremonial sittings, it is customary to list the legal achievements and employment history of the new appointees. The time available only permits me to be brief and selective, and I thank the Attorney-General for his covering of much of the aspects.

20 Deputy President Calligeros, as noted, you completed your law degree at the University of Adelaide in May 1985, and in recent years before your appointment to the tribunals, practised as a partner at Minter Ellison Lawyers. Like Deputy President Dolphin, you were an active member of the Society until your appointment to the Workers Compensation Tribunal.

25 You were a member of the Society's Accident Compensation Committee from 2001. You presented seven CPD sessions between 1995 and 2008, and in 2003 you appeared as one of the society's representatives before the Parliamentary Committee on Occupational Safety Rehabilitation And Compensation's Inquiry into the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare SafeWork SA Amendment Bill in 2003.

30 As the partner in charge of the workers compensation section at Minter Ellison Lawyers, where for many years it alone represented WorkCover SA, you were involved in every high-profile case involving WorkCover SA during that period. Three that readily come to mind involved workers by the names of Summers, Santinos and Davey, as I represented the workers in those matters.

35 As with Deputy President Dolphin, it was always satisfying to have an opposing practitioner who worked cooperatively to achieve a just outcome according to law. I note your clarity of thought and expression, evident then in our discussions and correspondence has found its way in your reasons for judgment published today.

45

As noted, apart from the law and away from it, you have had some involvement in bands, and one of your peers described you as a bit of a muso, recalling a jam session in Goodwood one evening in your earlier years when you played guitar in a band that I'm told was called Loss of Consortium. I'm not sure what we are to infer from that. Otherwise, you are known to be on a quest at the gym for a Greek god like physique - you know, lean, strong, chiselled: Hermes, Zeus, Poseidon, Calligeros.

Deputy President Dolphin, you were exposed to the WorkCover Scheme before graduating with a law degree. As a scaffolder you sustained injury and were a party to two separate disputes, resulting in a decision of the Workers Compensation Appeal Tribunal, and of the Workers Compensation Tribunal, both in 1997.

The course of those proceedings may provide some insight into what may have impressed upon you about the law and the practice of the law. In the first matter you were represented by a Mr C. Kourakis, as he then was; and on the second occasion, you were represented by Ms Marie Shaw, who was assisted with the boundless enthusiasm of Mr Black.

In one matter, the presiding judge was Judge Cawthorne, who was once described by a fellow presidential member of the tribunal as The Oracle, and the other was then recently appointed Judge Gilchrist DP, who has since become a long serving and highly respected judge in this state.

However, not happy with the outcome of the hearing before Gilchrist DP, you appealed to the Full Court with the formidable combination of Ms Shaw, who had then become Queen's Counsel, and Mr Kourakis, as he still was, as her junior. You were successful on appeal, and it's no wonder through that process that you would have become impressed upon the practice of the law.

You joined the Law Society on 7 December 2000 and remained an active member, including the chair of the Society's Industrial Relations Committee from January 2013. You have been involved in a number of high-profile cases in this state, and a notable case was being the solicitor representing Mr Duncan Campbell before the Full Court of the Supreme Court, with that court delivering its judgment in 2011, and finding that Medical Panels were valid but did not have the power to direct the Workers Compensation Tribunal to accept the panel decision; and that ultimately decisions were a matter for the tribunal, before which workers could be represented by lawyers. At the time you were quoted as saying:

Medical Panels will now be bound by procedural fairness, the rule of law, and the oversight of the Workers Compensation Tribunal.

That, if I may say so, is exactly in line with the principles of the legal profession and the Law Society, as I have previously expressed.

5 I understand that one of your first acts as principal of Lieschke and Weatherill Lawyers was to introduce a new and bright colour scheme to the office. Perhaps there was some of the Myer-Remm building influence. Well, you should feel well at home here in the tribunal, given its colour scheme that has just been implemented.

10 Although I expect that you will continue to miss the coffee breaks that I understand that you regularly had at Lucia's and where you were seen so regularly as to give rise to the thought that perhaps you had a long-term lease there.

15 On behalf of the Law Society, I again congratulate both Deputy Presidents Calligeros and Dolphin upon their appointments. If the tribunal pleases.

JENNINGS P: Thank you, Mr Rossi. Mr McBride.

20 MR McBRIDE: If it please the tribunal, your Honour the President, your Honours and Deputy Presidents, and of course conciliation officers, I acknowledge the Honourable John Rau today, Honourable Minister for Industrial Relations and Deputy Premier, and my fellow speakers.

25 As the chief and the peak employer body in the state, we're delighted to be part of today. We've worked very, very hard with the Minister and his department, the opposition, and with Return To Work to see what is the most significant reform in this area in many decades to come into fruition. So we're particularly pleased to be here at the special sitting of the opening of
30 the South Australian Employment Tribunal, and also to recognise, of course, the appointments of Deputy Presidents Mark Calligeros and Steven Dolphin.

The South Australian Employment Tribunal of course is going to play a pivotal role in the way that this Act is administered and that we really do
35 hope that it will deliver a more efficient and fair and balanced workers compensation scheme.

The South Australian Employment Tribunal will play, of course, a critical role in ensuring that saying, that justice deferred is often justice denied, and
40 so I think everybody who is a stakeholder in the process would like to see a fair, plain-speaking, efficient approach that sees a balance come out where workers, of course, are returned to work as soon as possible and fairly compensated where that's appropriate.

45 We know the economic and social cost when people are injured and they don't get back to work in a timely fashion, and we're delighted to see that the new legislation, by its very name, emphasises the need to get injured

employees back to work as soon as possible, for the sake of themselves, their families, our economy and the workplace.

5 We particularly recognise the two new Deputy Presidents today. You've heard from others today about their stellar track records in so many ways, and I won't add to that, except to say, of course, Deputy President Calligeros and I were former partners at Minter Ellison and, indeed, we are former band members, mainly for charity causes; things like the Homeless Legal Clinic. It wasn't a charity that people would come and listen to us, Mark, but it was
10 mainly that we were raising money for great causes.

15 Mark is also - for those of you who don't know - not only an amazing bass player, he's got a great voice as well and, obviously now, I understand from my colleague on the left, a chiselled body to go with it. I must say that the first time I met Deputy President Calligeros was in unfortunate circumstances, where my firm had just won the ability to solely provide defendant litigation services in the workers compensation jurisdiction and Mark's firm unfortunately was left out of that, and it was a very cold day when we walked into a band rehearsal together.

20 But I guess that connection between a drummer and a bass player lived through and Mark eventually joined us and provided fantastic leadership to our workers compensation practice for many years, and it's been great to have Deputy President Calligeros not only as a partner but as a friend.

25 Now, I don't know Deputy President Steve Dolphin as well as I should but you have stellar record and we've heard about that today and I can see that both of these appointments demonstrate a balance that we always look for in these kind of roles, and we obviously encourage that that balance going
30 forward is constantly recognised. So on behalf of Business SA and the whole South Australian employer community, I just want to congratulate both deputy presidents, acknowledge the important role of this tribunal and wish all of you every success in the days ahead.

35 JENNINGS P: Thank you, Mr McBride. Mr Szakacs.

40 MR SZAKACS: If it please the tribunal, I rise on behalf of SA Unions to acknowledge this important event and to mark the commencement of the South Australian Employment Tribunal and the appointments of Deputy Presidents Dolphin and Calligeros. To Deputy Presidents Dolphin and Calligeros, congratulations on your appointments and on joining other and all members of the South Australian Employment Tribunal.

45 SA Unions notes the significant reforms to the workers compensation jurisdiction that has precipitated the formation today of the South Australian Employment Tribunal. Before I speak of the South Australian Employment Tribunal, may I firstly acknowledge the contribution that the Workers

Compensation Tribunal has served the state over a number of years. The WCT has served this jurisdiction well, and the administration of justice, in an outstanding manner since its implementation in 1996.

5 The commencement today of the South Australian Employment Tribunal is a significant milestone. I congratulate the registrar and the conciliation officers on your new appointments. Your role in the effective and fair and timely access to justice for injured workers is both central to the operation of the South Australian Employment Tribunal but also the recognition and
10 enforcement of rights and responsibilities under the Return to Work Act.

Workers compensation is a highly litigated area of law and the South Australian Employment Tribunal commences at a time of very substantial legislative reform. I do trust this litigation will continue at a high level and
15 perhaps heighten as parties navigate their way through the new Return to Work Act.

SA Unions is committed to the health and wellbeing of injured workers and a fair, just, and balanced exercise of justice in this jurisdiction. In doing so, SA Unions is committed to closely monitoring the operation of the Return to
20 Work Act and its impact, be it positive or negative, to the rights, employment, and long-term health of injured workers in this state. We are committed to revisiting the legislation if injured workers are disadvantaged as such.

25 In addition to the fluidity of workers compensation law is the central pillar to this jurisdiction and that is the commitment to ensuring that injured workers are treated fairly and according to the law. This is a highly emotional jurisdiction. Injured workers often present under significant financial and
30 emotional strain. This jurisdiction truly does demand the very best of all those involved. The union advocates, legal practitioners, appointees, and the bench, all contribute in a material way to the lives of injured workers. In this, I trust that the South Australian Employment Tribunal will continue to commend the trust of injured workers.

35 I note and acknowledge the appointment today of Deputy Presidents Dolphin and Calligeros. Deputy President Dolphin, you have made a significant and lasting contribution to the lives of working people, be it in significant cases such as Campbell that altered the operation of medical panels here in South
40 Australia, or the successful criminal defence of Ark Tribe against coercive powers of the ABCC., your legacy of legal practice is to be commended in the highest order. I do trust that the patience which you have demonstrated in your support of your two true football teams, Adelaide United and Blackburn Rovers, will bring with you a level of patience to your position.

45 While, Deputy President Calligeros, your practice has been largely on the opposing side of Deputy President Dolphin - and I certainly make no attempt

to comment on your possession, or lack thereof, of a chiselled body - you both bring with you great intelligence, integrity and, as you both bring perhaps the most important part to this jurisdiction and attribute to this jurisdiction: empathy. You both share attributes that will see you operate with impartiality and decency. I know that your collective contributions to the South Australian Employment Tribunal will be significant.

Once again, SA Unions congratulates you both on your appointments today, the commencement of the South Australian Employment Tribunal, the appointments of conciliation officers and registrar to the South Australian Employment Tribunal. We wish staff of this South Australian Employment Tribunal the very best of luck in dealing and working within this jurisdiction moving forward. Thank you.

JENNINGS P: Thank you, Mr Szakacs. I invite Deputy President Calligeros to respond.

CALLIGEROS DP: Mr Attorney, Mr Rossi, Mr McBride, Nigel, Mr Szakacs, ladies and gentlemen, fellow members of the bench. Attorney and Minister, firstly, I'd like to thank you for reposing faith in me and for making the appointment that you have. I feel an acute sense of responsibility. It's a role I'm greatly looking forward to undertaking. I've been heartened by the response of all members of the tribunal and I think an exciting time lies ahead for all of us. Thank you.

I would like to state that your ability to get things done, your ability to cut through matters has been essential to the Return to Work Act being ready and commencing operation today and in the form it is, so you are to be commended for that.

Mr Rossi, Tony, I've enjoyed acting on the other side to you many, many times. You're right - I think we've had more than our fair share of matters go to the Full Court. We even had one that got to High Court leave application stage, and as an opponent you commanded the utmost respect. I'm delighted that you can represent the Society here today.

I'd forgotten some of the things I've done in the course of my time with the Society because one tends to, but I've always been a proud member of the Society and I'm delighted to have its endorsement in this role, and that includes providing talks and further information about practices and procedures of the tribunal in the future, along with my fellow Judges and Deputy Presidents. Can I say though, I wake up at a ridiculous hour every morning; that's why I go to the gym. I am not Adonis, I am not chiselled. Those comments, I think, are somewhat unfair to me.

Mr McBride, Nigel, again I feel delighted that you can be here today. Minter Ellison was the third firm I worked at. I started my practicing career at

Aldermans; about five years later I moved to Gun and Davey, and then in circumstances that you outlined, eventually moved to Minter Ellison. I gained immense contributions from a range of wonderful people at all three firms, but given you're here today I would like to acknowledge you in terms of the environment you created in terms of emphasising management skills for lawyers, team management skills, and that led me to thoroughly enjoy my time at Minter Ellison and have a very happy relationship with the fellow members of my team, who I miss.

Mr Szakacs, Joe, thank you for your kind words. I don't know you, as you don't really know me, but I can say I've always attempted to have a good relationship with opponents, be they legally qualified or be they union or employer association representatives. This tribunal has a very proud tradition of members of industrial associations being represented, and I think the best practitioners here treat members from such associations as equals. That has been one of the great successes of the tribunal, and it's a practice I would like to see and indeed, do my best to ensure it continues in SAET.

I just want to tell a short story about how one comes to do the things that one does. I started practice on the basis of a phone call from a friend telling me that there might be a job available at Aldermans. I inquired about it simply because I'd bought a house and I didn't have enough money to pay for the house working in a band and a restaurant, and I was due to be admitted shortly.

So I made a phone call. I was told to turn up on Monday, ask for Peter Corkery. That was the extent of my job interview; no face-to-face; no CV; no psychological testing. The world has changed a lot in 30 years, and I just regret that my sons are going into such a different labour market.

Within a short time I was running trials and the first one was before Judge O'Loughlin of the Industrial Relations Court. Judge O'Loughlin was a gentleman of the highest order; everyone said that, but I found out myself. I had a matter that had no possible basis of success. The client was being bloody-minded; they insisted that it be run. We couldn't win, to put it bluntly.

I got up to open. I tried to explain that without conceding because that wasn't really on, but Judge O'Loughlin read between the lines and very politely said, "Mr Calligeros, some of the matters of smallest compass here turn out to create the most important law." I knew mine wasn't one of them, but about half an hour later the trial had concluded and I felt enormous respect and relief at being treated with courtesy and kindness, and I would hope that I can remember that when I'm dealing with litigants in front of me.

I would like to acknowledge all the people from the firms I've worked with at Aldermans, at Gun and Davey and my principal there, Michael Ricketts, and

at Minter Ellison with Nigel and also with Greg May in particular, the leaders of that firm for a long, long time. I would like to acknowledge and thank my team at Minters. I think your professionalism is no small part of the reason why I've been acknowledged and I've ended up in this role.

5

To my new colleagues, I thank you for the warmth of your reception, the support that you've given me, the insights that you've given me, the information - I've been very grateful. I acknowledge the comments made by Mr Szakacs and Mr McBride about the importance of the conciliation officers. I've appeared before all the existing conciliation officers many, many, many times and they are an integral part of this place and will continue to be so.

15 Finally, I would just like to thank my family - boys, Josh, Max and Isaac; your mother and I are extremely proud of you and I'm delighted that you're here today I want to thank three women, in particular. I would like to thank - my mother; mum, thank you very much for looking after me largely on your own and bringing me up and giving me a good start in life; Mary-Anne my secretary, who looked after me for 24 of my 29 practising years across three
20 different firms - yes, she moved; heaven only knows why, but thank you very much, Mabs. And Ellie my wonderful wife, who has just had a milestone birthday, thank you very much for putting up with me.

25 This is an important day for this scheme and for the state. This state has performed poorly on a comparative basis, we are told, against other states in relation to workers compensation durations. There are a number of reasons for that. We start from a back-marker. Other states have some dispensations that we don't have. Nonetheless, we are going to grasp the mettle and provide a fair, efficient, but just and balanced compensation scheme that is
30 the equal of any. Thank you.

JENNINGS P: I invite Deputy President Dolphin to respond.

35 DOLPHIN DP: Deputy Premier, Minister for Industrial Relations, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

40 My legal career did not commence by the traditional route. However, I was extremely fortunate to begin my working life in the building and construction industry. The work was hard and the hours were long, but it was work that I enjoyed and took a great sense of pride in. I thank my parents Jean and Peter, and my grandparents Doris and Alan, for instilling in me the respect for the dignity of work - whatever that work may be - and for teaching me a very early lifelong lesson; that is, that rarely do you achieve anything in life
45 without a considerable sustained effort.

My early years of blue collar work not only set the tempo for my future career but also taught me how to relate to people and to see a problem from

5 the other side. Pomposity and truculence were rarely rewarded on a building site. By age 20 I was in charge of a team of men; such a leadership role came naturally to me. Later in life, when I was leading a law firm, the lessons that I learnt, not necessarily at university but in the construction industry, were the ones that assisted me the most.

10 Whilst studying law at university I had only one goal and that was to become an industrial lawyer. It was that or nothing. I was fortunate that the partners of Palios Meegan and Nicholson saw enough in me to give me a start. The mentoring I received from Julia Palios made me the lawyer that I became and I thank her publicly for the faith that she showed in me.

15 Of course, it's all well and good to be a lawyer but then you have to find work to do. My career would have been nothing but for the workers and unions of this state who placed their trust in me to lead them through their legal troubles. It is a truly great honour to be a champion for a worthy cause. I thank all those who saw fit to instruct me over the years but principally, and respectfully, I acknowledge Martin O'Malley, who never wavered in his support of me, particularly when matters of great importance were being litigated.

20 The prospect of being part of this new tribunal was an opportunity not to be missed; that's not to say that I was unfulfilled in my life in legal practice. In many respects I was at the top of my game. I wish to put on record my appreciation for the hard work and effort of the lawyers and staff of my previous law firm Lieschke and Weatherill. I know that that firm is in good hands under the stewardship of Michael Ats.

30 It has been my experience that this state is extremely well served by the diligent and hardworking members of the legal profession. It has been my great privilege throughout my career to have worked with some excellent lawyers. I've learnt from you all and I'm indebted to you.

35 I thank my colleagues on the bench and the staff of the tribunal for making me welcome. I particularly want to express my appreciation to President and Senior Judge Jennings for allowing me to undertake a leadership role in the establishment of the South Australian Employment Tribunal.

40 Finally, I wish to thank my wife Gianna and my children Seth and Emilia for their love and understanding; it can sometimes be difficult living with a busy lawyer and there has been, and no doubt will be, many a missed family event due to the pressures of work.

45 I believe that this tribunal will become the pre-eminent employment court in Australia. The vision to unite all litigation that relates to the world of work into the one tribunal is nation-leading and is to be commended. I look

forward to serving South Australia fairly and faithfully, and without fear or favour. Thank you.

JENNINGS P: Registrar, adjourn the tribunal.

5 REGISTRAR: This special sitting stands adjourned.

ADJOURNED

[9.47 AM]