



Venetia Bennett

Special Counsel

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OVERVIEW

Venetia Bennett is an experienced litigator who acts for international and Australian clients in the resolution of commercial disputes, claims and litigation matters across a range of industries, with a focus on construction, oil and gas and sport. She advises and represents clients in relation to contractual disputes, construction and project issues, tortious matters, regulatory inquiries, investigations and prosecutions, and joint venture disputes.

Venetia is experienced in advising and acting for clients in relation to all aspects of dispute resolution, including the formal stages of legal proceedings (court and arbitration) as well as informal dispute resolution processes such as mediation and expert determination. She has a strong record in advising clients during significant incidents and crises, including in relation to any legal proceedings that follow.

Venetia combines excellent technical skills, strong problem-solving capabilities and commercial, strategic thinking with a passion for what she does and the industries in which she practices. Her focus is to provide responsive and commercial advice, and she enjoys building relationships with clients in the course of doing so.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining the firm in early 2013, Venetia was a lawyer and senior associate at a large Australian national law firm.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Best Lawyers in Australia*, listed in Litigation (2022)
- Winner, *Women's Achievement Awards*, 2020
- Finalist, *Lawyers Weekly Women in Law Awards* for Special Counsel of the Year, 2017
- Finalist, *Women's Achievement Awards*, 2010

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Association (ANZSLA) (President 2012 - 2018, Secretary 2009 - 2012)
- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Football West Tribunal Chair

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "Sports Law: Current issues in anti-doping" presented as a guest lecturer at Edith Cowan University, Perth, 2013-2016, 2018, 2019
- "Royal Commissions: Ethical challenges" presented on various occasions in 2018 and 2019
- "Legal Professional Privilege" presented on various occasions between 2013 and 2017
- "Development of sports law in Australia" presented at the Melbourne University Law Masters Sports Law 25th Anniversary Conference, Melbourne, July 11 and 12, 2013
- "Conducting effective tribunals" presented at the Western Australian Department of Sport and Recreation, Perth, September 7, 2012
- "Are you prepared for a crisis?" presented for Australian Corporate Counsel (ACC), Perth, August 14, 2012

EDUCATION

- Company Directors Course, Australian Institute of Company Directors, 2018 *GAICD*
- LL.M., University of Melbourne, 2016 (*Construction and Sports Disputes*)
- MBus, Deakin University, 2008 (*Sport Management*)
- LL.B., University of Western Australia, 2005
- B.A., University of Western Australia, 2003

ADMISSIONS

- Federal Court of Australia
- High Court of Australia
- Supreme Court of Victoria
- Supreme Court of Western Australia

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP POWERED BY HUB

- November 2018, Royal Commissions: Ethical Challenges (*Webinar*)
- September 2015, Arbitration World (*Alerts/Updates*)

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Complex Commercial Litigation and Disputes
- Construction and Infrastructure
- Construction and Infrastructure Dispute Resolution
- Offshore Construction
- Oil and Gas
- White Collar Crime

INDUSTRIES

- Consumer Products
- Energy
- Energy Disputes
- Sports
- Utilities

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Advising Sportsbet in respect of a contentious matter involving the operation and effect of its terms and conditions.
- Advising a large offshore construction and installation contractor in relation to a significant dispute arising from a large scale offshore construction project.
- Advising Cricket Australia in relation to the serious injury and death of an Australian player.
- Advising and acting as counsel for listed Australian companies in Federal Court proceedings for curative relief in respect non-compliance with Australian corporations law (including EHR Resources Limited [2018] FCA 997, Azure Minerals Limited [2013] FCA 63 and Strike Energy Limited [2012] FCA 725).
- Advising Tennis West in relation to the redevelopment of its own facilities, in the context of the new Perth Stadium and redevelopment project on the Burswood Peninsula.

- Acting for Quadrant Energy in relation to a multi-party contractual dispute regarding seismic survey operations and liability for shared and joint costs.
- Advising a sub-contractor to John Holland in a dispute arising from the Perth Children's Hospital project.
- Advising the developer and operator of an aged care facility in an expert determination in relation to a defective building works.
- Acting for Thiess to recover a debt against a former employee arising from theft of the company's items.
- Acting for MaxiTRANS Australia Pty Ltd in a dispute with Red Rock Consulting Pty Ltd in a claim for breach of contract and misleading and deceptive conduct arising from the failed implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning solution for MaxiTRANS' business.
- Acting for a number of sports, including the AFL, in an anti-doping tribunal hearing involving a player; acting for a number of individual athletes in relation to anti-doping rule violation assertions.
- Representing HWE Mining in its successful defence of a prosecution (and subsequent appeal) by the State of Western Australia under the Western Australian mines safety and inspection legislation.
- Advising Global Rapid Rugby in relation to establishing a new international rugby competition, including with respect to integrity regulations, risk, dispute resolution processes, competition services, player contracts and sanction arrangements.
- Obtaining urgent injunctive relief for SRG to prevent the dissemination of confidential information.
- Advising an international train manufacturer in a dispute associated with delay, variation, defect and warranty claims.
- Advising ATCO Gas Australia on a major incident in Western Australia, including managing responses to regulators and preparing for a Coronial investigation and anticipated legal proceedings.
- Sitting as a tribunal member and chair to hear disciplinary, grievance and member protection issues across a number of sports, including football, cricket, basketball, tennis, cycling and speedcars.
- Advising the National Basketball League in relation to its decision to declare a winner of the 2020 NBL Finals Series after the series was impacted by the emergence of COVID-19 in Australia.
- Advising and acting for Apache Corporation and its Australian affiliates (Apache Energy and Apache Northwest) in relation to the explosion and fire at the Varanus Island gas processing facilities in June 2008, including in respect of a regulatory investigation and the successful defence of a prosecution by the State of Western Australia, administrative law issues and significant multi-party civil claims by customers.
- Acting for a global design, engineering and management consultancy in relation to its claim against an international joint venture for unpaid claims under a contract relating to a rail construction project in Doha, Qatar.