

Tracey Scott

Deputy Commissioner at Australian Professional Leagues

Maggie Kearney, Associate at Corrs Chambers Westgarth, chats with **Tracey Scott**, Deputy Commissioner - Professional Leagues at Australian Professional Leagues about Tracey's career in sports administration and her thoughts on International Women's Day.

Tracey Scott is a well-respected sports administrator with a professional career in sport which has spanned over 15 years. Tracey holds an LLM from the University of Melbourne. Tracey's experience cuts across both professional and Olympic sports having held various senior roles at Cricket Australia (CA), Football Australia (FA) and the Australian Professional Leagues (APL), including Senior Legal Counsel and High Performance manager at CA, General Counsel of Regulatory and Integrity and General Manager of Leagues at FA. In addition, up until 2019, Tracey was a Director of Hockey Australia, having spent 7 years on the Board during a period in which Olympic sports have needed to re-imagine themselves given the growth of professional sport in Australia. Currently, Tracey is Deputy Commissioner at the Australian Professional Leagues and in particular, leads the Product Innovation and Stakeholder Management Team as well as providing strategic oversight across all four Leagues of A-League, Westfield W-League, Y-League and the E-League. Tracey also sits on FIFA's Professional Women's Football Task Force, being one of only 10 people selected worldwide and is the only professional leagues representative on the Task Force.



MAGGIE KEARNEY: Did you always want your current job? If so, what did you do to position yourself to get it? If not, how did your career path lead you here?

TRACEY SCOTT: When I was admitted to practice law the early 2000s I would have to say that I did not have a prescriptive view on how I wanted my legal career to evolve as I wanted to remain open-minded to different opportunities that might arise. However, early in my private practice career I knew I wanted to work for a sustained period in sports law and/or the not for profit sector and so I took steps to try to allow myself to be well-placed to make the most of any opportunities that might arise - this included completing a masters in law at the University of Melbourne with a focus on sports law as well as volunteering for sports disciplinary tribunals.

Fortunately for me, in 2005 I had the opportunity to join Cricket Australia as one of their two in-house lawyers and I have remained working in professional sport since that time. Whilst I have always loved being a legal advisor in the context of professional sports, I was interested in tackling a broader remit which involved operational and product development strategic input and stakeholder management, as I felt I could make a more lasting and meaningful contribution with a broader remit. Therefore, I would

say that in or around 2017 I was interested in opportunities to transition into a more generalist management role and absolutely love my current job where I feel I have a great balance in pursuing my legal and non-legal passions.

KEARNEY: What's the greatest risk you've taken as a professional?

SCOTT: I feel like the greatest professional risk I have taken was to move out of a dedicated legal role and into my current role, which is very diverse and fluid. At the time of making that decision, I was nervous as in taking that step, I was walking away from a professional identity and a sense of security and definition that I had known for close to 18 years. However, as we all know, any decision that has great risk also has opportunity and I am so thankful I embraced the new opportunity with an open mind.

KEARNEY: If you could have dinner with any woman - living or passed, real or fictional, who would it be and why?

SCOTT: This is a really difficult question. There are some many incredible women who have made the world a better place through their bravery, strength and vision. However, if I had to choose one, I would love to have dinner with Ruth Bader Ginsburg. I would be so grateful for the opportunity to speak with her about her professional career, what her support networks were and knowledge

she would share about how to so successfully traverse a system from a starting position of disadvantage.

KEARNEY: What advice would you give to the next generation of female leaders in the industry?

SCOTT: Personally, as a leader I feel it is important to be authentic, consistent, compassionate and visible. There is no one particular way to lead - it really is about providing an environment for others that is safe, challenging and empowering. I also feel that the saying "the standard you walk past is the standard you accept" are words that all leaders should be cognisant of and reflect on in their everyday behaviours as leaders.

KEARNEY: How do you unplug from work?

SCOTT: This is an easy one! I unplug from work whenever I am spending time with Babou, my beautiful golden retriever and Jamie, my gorgeous ginger rescue cat. When you work in professional sport you do tend to work / be switched on 7 days a week dealing with issues and trying to improve the product for the fans, players, support staff and everyone that brings game day to life. So before I do anything else I start my day by walking Babou with a coffee and I have realised that apart from having quality time with my eldest furkid, it helps me to decompress, feel refreshed, clear my mind and energised for the day.