Queensland Law Society

SPECIALIST PRACTICE CONFERENCE 26

7-9 OCTOBER 2026 • BRISBANE

Program – Commercial Law

1hr

Keynote Address: Inside the Matter - ASIC v Bekier (Star Entertainment)

This session will examine the Federal Court's landmark decision in ASIC v Bekier (Star Entertainment) and its impact on directors', officers' and in-house counsel duties. It will explore the Court's findings on risk escalation, board reporting, governance oversight, and the evolving role of General Counsel. Attendees will gain practical guidance on managing legal and reputational risks, advising boards, documenting decision-making, and meeting expectations of care and diligence in complex organisational environments. The session will provide actionable lessons for legal practitioners seeking to strengthen governance and mitigate regulatory exposure.

Presenters:

Shaun Buckton, Senior Associate, Norton Rose Fullbright

Jenna Scott-Speyers, Partner, Norton Rose Fullbright



1hr

Bullion, Bitcoin and carbon credits: Commercial drafting for new forms of property

The emergence of Bitcoin and other digital assets is requiring commercial lawyers to reconsider traditional concepts of property, possession, control and secured transactions. Using Bitcoin, bullion and carbon credits as practical case studies, this seminar examines how established principles of Australian commercial law are being applied to new forms of property and what that means for commercial drafting.

The presentation will consider recent judicial developments, the Personal Property Securities Act 2009 (Cth), custody and control of digital assets, tokenisation, insolvency issues, and the practical implications for secured lending and commercial transactions. Rather than focusing solely on legal theory, the seminar will provide practical drafting guidance for commercial practitioners, including suggested approaches to definitions, security agreements, loan documentation and collateral descriptions where the legal characterisation of the underlying asset continues to evolve.

The session is intended for senior commercial practitioners, banking and finance lawyers, insolvency practitioners and property lawyers seeking practical guidance on advising clients and drafting documents involving emerging asset classes.

Presenter: **Helen Fielder**, Legal practitioner Director, CCG Lawyers

Chair: **Tim Elliss**, Barrister, Queensland Bar

1hr

Structuring in the post-2026 Federal Budget world

Navigating the immediate structural consequences of the latest Federal Budget. This session will explore advanced asset protection strategies, evolving corporate tax structures, trust-related developments, and anti-avoidance considerations affecting corporate groups.

Presenters:

James Stokes, Director, Stokes Lawyers

Lerrin Acuzar, Associate, Stokes Lawyers

Chair: **Peter McKnoulty**, Consultant, McCullough Robertson

1hr

Legal update on matters impacting the NFP Sector

Join a session where leading practitioners will speak on topics reshaping the not-for-profit sector. This session will provide practical insights to help strengthen adviser/director oversight. Topics include managing conflicts of interest, emerging AI and cyber governance, whistleblower disclosure, privacy risks, and key case law around Queensland Revenue Office matters.

Presenters:

Sonya Beyers, Director, Governance by Design

Jessica Lipsett, Director, Vocare Law

Nicole Shenfield, Director, Paxton Hall

Facilitator: **Emeritus Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes OAM**, QUT

PM&BS

1hr

Navigating an SPA

This session will explore sale and purchase agreements from term sheet stage through to the drafting of key clauses. The presenters will consider asset sales versus share sales, key points of contention, drafting considerations to ensure enforceability of the provisions, and where disputes can arrive in the negotiation and implementation of sale and purchase agreements.

Presenters:

Phillip Smith, Practice Leader - Corporate/M&A Team, Talbot Sayer

Giuseppe Russo, Practice Leader - Disputes team, Talbot Sayer

Chair: **James Stokes**, Legal Practice Director, Stokes Lawyers

SL

1hr

Navigating the Matrix: A guide to electronic document management in Queensland Courts

As courts continue their transition to digital document management and electronic filing, and with the increasing impact of AI, practitioners must adapt to new technologies and processes. This session will discuss practical approaches to electronic document management with a focus on the Queensland courts, including e-trials, hyperlinked court books, document review platforms, and data security issues, while also exploring how publicly available court search tools can support litigation strategy and commercial due diligence. The panel will also discuss developments and issues associated with the use of AI to assist with document management.

Presenters:

Julie Ruffin, Resolution Registrar, Brisbane Supreme Court

Jason Faulkner, Acting Director, Business Improvement, Supreme District and Land Courts Service

Andrew Shute, Senior Consultant, Minter Ellison

Facilitator: **Toby Boys**, Principal, DRM Legal; Accredited Specialist (Commercial Litigation) - Qld; Queensland Law Society Accredited Mediator

PM&BS PS

Presenters



Lerrin Acuzar

Lerrin Acuzar is a Senior Associate at Stokes Lawyers, practising primarily in commercial law, succession and estate planning, business structuring, and commercial transactions.

He advises business owners, trustees, high-net-worth individuals and families on complex legal and strategic matters, with a particular focus on asset protection, taxation-driven structuring and succession planning.

Lerrin regularly assists clients with corporate restructures, trusts, business acquisitions and disposals, and intergenerational wealth transfer.

He is committed to delivering commercially focused, practical advice that balances legal risk with real-world outcomes for clients.



Sonya Beyers

Sonya Beyers is the Director of Governance by Design, a specialist consultancy that collaborates with boards and leadership teams to evaluate governance structures, clarify legal obligations and foster leadership from the Boardroom.

Drawing on her background as a qualified solicitor and governance consultant, she supports decision-making, navigates structural reform and improves governance effectiveness across corporate and non-profit sectors.



Toby Boys

Toby Boys is an Accredited Specialist in Commercial Litigation and a National Accredited Mediator. He has acted as both a dispute resolution and litigation adviser and an independent mediator for over 25 years, assisting clients and parties in a wide range of commercial and regulatory matters across a range of jurisdictions.



Shaun Buckton

Shaun Buckton is a senior associate working in the commercial litigation team in Norton Rose Fulbright Australia's Sydney office.

Shaun specialises in regulatory investigations and enforcement proceedings, as well as general commercial disputes, with an emphasis on class action proceedings.



Tim Elliss

Tim is a barrister practising from Level 27 Chambers in Brisbane. He has a broad commercial practice.

Prior to his return to Brisbane in 2024, Tim was a partner at a leading commercial dispute resolution firm based in London, where he acted for a diverse range of UK and international clients. With a practice embracing disputes across a broad range of areas, he has a particular focus on those relating to energy and resources, corporate and commercial, and financial services, as well as civil fraud and asset recovery matters.

Tim started his career at Allens Arthur Robinson in Brisbane where he qualified in November 2008. He worked in Litigation and Insolvency at Allens until 2011, before spending two years at a leading offshore firm. In 2013, Tim joined Enyo Law in London and was a partner between 2016 and 2024. He was called to the bar in October 2024.



Jason Faulkner

Jason Faulkner is the Director, Business Improvement within the Department of Justice - Supreme, District and Land Courts Service. With 20 years' of public service in Queensland's justice system, he has worked across registry operations, executive governance roles and court modernisation initiatives. Jason currently leads the transformation of the Supreme, District and Land Courts' civil case management systems, including expansion of electronic lodgement services. He has extensive experience working with the judiciary, legal practitioners and government stakeholders to deliver technology-enabled improvements that enhance court operations, service delivery and access to justice.



Helen Fielder

Helen Fielder is the Legal Practitioner Director of CCG Lawyers and Director of The Corporate Compliance Group Pty Ltd. She has extensive experience in banking and finance, financial services compliance, AML/CTF, corporate advisory work and secured transactions, including prior roles with major Australian law firms and international investment banks. Helen has also authored legal commentary and precedents in banking, finance and PPSA-related areas. Her current work focuses on the intersection of commercial law, financial regulation and emerging asset structures, including Bitcoin, bullion, tokenisation, custody and control. In this presentation, “Bitcoin, Bullion and Blockchain”, Helen examines unresolved issues in tokenisation, custody and Australian commercial law, with particular reference to ownership, insolvency, secured lending and the Personal Property Securities Act 2009 (Cth). Her presentation is also informed by current Australian appellate developments, including the High Court’s consideration of the proprietary characterisation of Bitcoin and its implications for custody, control, secured lending and insolvency analysis.



Jessica Lipsett

Jessica is a Director and leader of the Charity & Not-For-Profits Law team at Vocare Law. Her role encompasses assisting charitable clients in all aspects of their work, from the start-up/registration/structuring phase through to regulatory compliance, complex dispute resolution and everything in between.



Emeritus Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes OAM

Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes OAM is the former Director of The Australian Centre of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies (ACPNS). He has written extensively about nonprofit tax and regulation, nonprofit legal entities, government grants and standard charts of accounts as a means of reducing the compliance burden. He is a founding member of the ATO Charities Consultative Committee and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Advisory Board. In June 2003, Myles was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) "For service to the community by providing education and support in legal, financial and administrative matters to nonprofit organisations.".



Peter McKnoulty

Peter McKnoulty, BCom LLB (Hons) CTA MAICD, is a consultant with McCullough Robertson, having been a partner with the firm from July 1986 to December 2011. His practice focuses on tax and commercial law with an emphasis on estate planning, taxation, tax planning, business structuring, business succession and family business intergenerational transfer.

He is also the Founder of Transition Planning Australia, which assists Baby Boomers and others in the transition from business or work to the next phase of their lives.



Giuseppe Russo

Giuseppe Russo is a Practice Leader in the Disputes Team at Talbot Sayer. He regularly acts in corporate and M&A disputes, advising on warranty claims, earn-out disputes, and claims involving alleged misleading conduct arising from transactions. Giuseppe also has significant experience in restraint of trade disputes, including those arising from transactions, employment agreements and shareholder arrangements.



Julie Ruffin

Julie is Resolution Registrar (Civil) for the Supreme Court of Queensland. Prior to taking up this role, she practised for over twenty years in defendant insurance litigation. She conducts case management processes designed to enhance the efficient conduct of litigation, including the effective management of documents, the identification (and resolution) of real issues in dispute, and planning for a timely and cost effective trial. Julie was involved in the review of the higher courts' procedure surrounding the electronic management of documents in civil proceedings. This procedure relies on the courts' eTrials platform (a free, secure, user-friendly web portal) which facilitates the navigation of the eCourtbook via the portal before and during a trial. Use of the eCourtbook provides time and costs savings and offers enhanced searchability and 24 hour global access to documents.



Jenna Scott-Speyers

Jenna Scott-Speyers is a specialist insolvency and restructuring lawyer based in Brisbane, with significant litigious experience in insolvency, regulatory, class action, banking and general commercial matters, as well as transactional restructuring, across geographic locations.

She has acted on significant and highly complex litigation, regulatory and insolvency matters, involving substantial documentary evidence and multifaceted lay and expert witness evidence across jurisdictions, including acting in one of only a handful of securities class actions to be litigated in Australia.

Jenna's clients include government regulators, intermediaries, all of the major Australian banks and major corporates.



Nicole Shenfield

Nicole is a commercial and charity lawyer. In her charity law practice, Nicole has acted for a range of charities across a variety of sectors on matters expanding across areas of commercial law and also charity law specific issues including structuring of charities, obtaining a variety of tax concession endorsements, governance and constitutions reviews, restructures, membership disputes, assisting incorporated associations and letters patent entities in transferring to companies limited by guarantee, establishing and operating public and private ancillary funds, school structuring and accreditation, establishing public funds (including scholarship funds, school buildings funds etc), fundraising compliance, ACNC investigations and compliance, cy-prés schemes and charitable trust administration.



Andrew Shute

Andrew is a Senior Legal Consultant in MinterEllison's Dispute Resolution team, with more than 30 years' experience in commercial litigation and alternative dispute resolution. He advises a wide range of public and private sector clients on complex commercial disputes and regulatory investigations, with recent matters spanning cyber incidents, climate-related claims in the resources sector, and investigations in the tertiary education sector. He has also been at the forefront of applying technology to improve the efficiency of litigation, including through work with the courts and the Queensland Law Society (QLS) to identify areas for reform. That work has recently extended into AI policy development and education for the profession. He regularly presents on litigation and ADR, best practice in discovery, information management and cyber security, and AI.



Phillip Smith

Phillip is a Practice Leader (Corporate), specialising in corporate M&A. He regularly advises clients on buying and selling companies and businesses, shareholder agreements, employee incentive plans. Phillip regularly advises private equity clients, founders and trade buyers and sellers on all aspects of M&A. Phillip handles both domestic and cross-border M&A, and has extensive experience advising on FIRB.



James Stokes

James is recognised as a leading private and commercial lawyer specialising in assisting families, business owners and aspirational individuals to build and protect wealth. He has represented private clients including HNW individuals, members of parliament and household names.

James is a Chartered Tax Adviser with the Tax Institute of Australia and a Queensland Law Society Accredited Specialist in Business Law.

James was a founder of Men's Legal Service in 2016 and currently serves as Chairperson on its board. James is an Accredited Mediator and holds Masters of Law in Commercial Law and Masters of Family Law and Dispute Resolution.