



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON. KIM CARR

Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

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REAPPOINTMENT OF DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Senator Kim Carr, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, today announced the reappointment of Ms Sigrid Higgins to the Patent and Trade Marks Attorneys Disciplinary Tribunal.

The tribunal plays an important role in our innovation system by providing the appropriate checks and balances in relation to the conduct and discipline of intellectual property professionals.

Ms Higgins is an experienced barrister with 25 years experience in the legal profession and it gives me great pleasure to announce Ms Higgins' re-appointment as the single member of the disciplinary tribunal for a further three year period.

During the course of her first term, Ms Higgins has made a significant contribution to this often difficult and demanding role. Her reappointment will maintain the integrity of the tribunal.

The tribunal was established under the Patents Regulations 1991 to hear matters referred to it by the Professional Standards Board for Patent and Trade Marks Attorneys in cases of alleged professional misconduct.

The main issues considered by the disciplinary tribunal relate to patent and trade marks attorneys charged with unsatisfactory or unprofessional conduct, or charges that an attorney was fraudulent in obtaining registration.

The tribunal has the option to reprimand an attorney or, in more serious cases, to suspend or cancel an attorney's registration.

The Professional Standards Board administers regulatory and disciplinary matters for patent and trade marks attorneys in Australia. More information is available at <http://www.psb.gov.au/index.htm>

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