

## **KATE WATERFORD'S BOARD CAREER JOURNEY**

Kate Waterford, Special Counsel at Canberra's Maliganis Edwards Johnson, is one of the ACT's brand of Australian Institute of Company Directors' (AICD) young female members who is carving out a successful board directorship career in the not-for-profit (NFP) sector.

A non-executive director of Amnesty International Australia (AIA), Waterford, who has a real passion for social justice, has been involved with human rights organisations in a voluntary capacity for years. Prior to becoming a Director of AIA, Waterford was a member of the AIA ACT and Southern NSW branch committee. She serves on the ACT Law Society's Human Rights and Access to Justice Committee, as well as on various committees for Australian Lawyers for Human Rights.

'I came to Amnesty after having lived for several years in India where I was teaching law and financial management at university and advising the university on its social development program and its international partnerships,' Waterford said.

'When I came back to Australia, I was very interested in finding another role which was going to give me an opportunity to contribute on a strategic level to an organisation that was working for the betterment of the world. Human rights are my passion,' Waterford continued.

Waterford has completed the AICD's flagship Company Directors Course and says there are a number of other courses which she intends completing in the future. Beyond this, Waterford says the AICD has provided invaluable support to her in carving out her board career.

'The course, the journal and database of articles are very helpful. But the networking has been incredible – I have met a fabulous bunch of people through the course and have connected with people after AICD events who have actually helped me navigate some of the challenges I was facing,' Waterford added.

For the NFP sector, and particularly when it comes to fundraising, it is essential that governance be at best-practice level. Having developed from a grassroots, volunteer level, Waterford commented that AIA is now in the process of transforming into a nationally-led activist organisation, so that its activities can be coordinated more effectively and efficiently, in an NFP landscape where vying for resources is increasingly challenging.

"Amnesty is a very powerful and influential organisation, with 7 million members worldwide. My role as a director of AIA is to help guide the shift in a strategic way, building on the organisation's volunteer roots and democratic values, to make it even stronger and more effective," Waterford said.

The AICD was engaged by AIA to conduct a full analysis report of its governance practices, the results of which were considered by the board and members. The AICD has provided advice to the organisation with regard to this transformation process.