

## Biography of Dr. Scott Calnan

I graduated from the Law School of the University of New South Wales with a Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) degree, the highest degree in law awarded by that law school. I also hold a Master of Laws (LLM) degree from the University of New South Wales, a Master of Laws (Public Law) from the Australian National University, a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from the University of Western Australia. Each of my law degrees specialised in human rights law and practice.

I am the author of *The Effectiveness of Domestic Human Rights NGOs: A Comparative Study*, which was published globally by Martinus Nijhoff. I am also the co-author with Simon Rice of *Sustainable Advocacy: Capabilities and Attitudes of Australian Human Rights NGOs*, which was published by the Australian Lawyers for Human Rights and the Australian Human Rights Centre.

I convened and taught the course on human rights law at the University of Western Sydney. I also taught law at the University of Sydney and Macquarie University.

Currently, I am a Senior Lawyer at Chalk & Fitzgerald Lawyers and Consultants where my practice focuses on acting for indigenous clients and organisations. I have appeared in the Land and Environment Court of NSW, the NSW Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court of NSW, the Federal Court, the NSW Administrative Decisions Tribunal and the NSW District Court. I have acted in several key cases under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW)* (ALRA) including:

- 1) The Nambucca Heads case that established the legal test for s.36(1)(b1) of the ALRA;
- 2) The Malabar Police Station case that established important principles relating to claims over buildings under the ALRA; and
- 3) The Newcastle Post Office case, which was the first case where an Aboriginal land council succeeded in a large scale claim for a building under the ALRA.

In addition to claims under the ALRA, I have also acted for indigenous organisations in matters under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*. I have also advised on the international law of human rights as it relates to indigenous people, the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* and on matters of administrative and constitutional law.

I am a longstanding member of the Human Rights Committee of the Law Society of NSW where I have engaged in advocacy on a wide range of human rights issues and have contributed to the Committee's work in relation to the requirements of the International Law of Human Rights. I have also represented the Committee before the Law Council of Australia. I am also a longstanding member and collaborator with Australian Lawyers for Human Rights.

I have had longstanding contact with domestic human rights NGOs in North America and Europe. In 2005 I undertook a legal placement in the Legal Department of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the United States, the world's largest domestic human rights organisation, and I continue to maintain links to the NAACP.

The reason that I have nominated for the position of Secretary of ALHR is that I have a growing interest in the governance of non-profit human rights organisations and believe that ALHR needs a Secretary to further its mission. I am also keen to get further experience in relation to such a position.