The Australian
Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5831

Jenkins, Kate

Occupation Commissioner, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Kate Jenkins held the position of Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner from February 2016 to 2023. She was previously the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights commissioner, a position she had held since 2013. Jenkins was educated at Tintern Grammar and Geelong Grammar School, followed by the University of Melbourne where she studied arts and law and graduated with double honours degrees. Between 1993 and 2013, Jenkins was partner at Freehills (now Herbert Smith Freehills); her areas of specialisation included equal opportunity and diversity. She is a current board member (and former director) of the Heide Museum of Modern Art and the Carlton Football Club; for many years she also served on the board of Berry Street Victoria, a charity which helps disadvantaged children, young people and families. In her role as Victorian Equal Opportunity commissioner, Jenkins conducted an independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, among Victoria Police personnel. She also convened a Victorian chapter of the 'Male Champions of Change' group, an initiative of former Federal Sex Discrimination commissioner Elizabeth Broderick which aims to advance gender equality and increase opportunities for women in the workplace by enlisting the assistance of men in positions of power in the workplace. In 2015, Jenkins was named in the Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards.

As Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Jenkins delivered the 2020 Respect@Work report, the findings of a national inquiry into sexual harassment in workplaces, and in 2021 she led a review of the Parliament House workplace culture. Jenkins was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2023 for distinguished service to human rights governance, to advancing gender equity, to the promotion of inclusivity, and to the law. She was appointed the chair of the Australian Sports Commission in May 2024.

Published resources

Site Exhibition
Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016, http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Author Details
Marina Loane

Created 17 August 2016
Last modified 12 April 2025

Digital resources



Title: Kate Jenkins
Type: Image
Date: 3 May, 2023