



Media Statement

Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation leadership announcement

The Board of the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation announces that, after more than ten years of dedicated service, its founders Marie and George Jepson have decided to step down from their involvement with the Foundation, and will hand over the leadership of the Foundation to its Board.

Marie Jepson has been the Executive Director of the Foundation since its establishment in 2008.

The Board extends its deepest gratitude to Marie and George for their many years of continuous, devoted and determined service which they have provided to the Foundation and its supporters. They have made an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of the Australian legal profession, in honour of their late son Tristan.

Reflecting on what has been achieved, Marie said:

"The time has come for me to step down as Executive Director of TJMF and hand over the future development of this endeavour to the legal profession itself. TJMF's work and our efforts over the past years have been our gift to the profession in Tristan's memory.

The full-time role over the last ten years has taken its toll on me, the learning curve almost vertical at times. I have been encouraged to keep going many times by the personal stories of the value to individuals of the changes being made with the support of the Foundation and the potential for further change. In my view we have reached a tipping point with 200 signatories and a well stream of support across Australia to enable George and me to catch our breath and over the next few months support the transition.

I sincerely thank the many people who have supported me personally and TJMF in so many ways over the years, as well as the signatories for their public commitment to address this issue and make the changes needed.

When our son Tristan took his own life, we had no inkling where this journey would lead or that it would span fourteen years and see us celebrate the 10th anniversary of TJMF.

Creating a psychologically safe and healthy workplace culture does not happen overnight. It requires sustained effort and active leadership commitment to creating a team. It is a journey only possible with the combined efforts and commitment of leaders and staff, working together to build a culture which does no harm and where all staff can thrive and be the best they can be. "



As the Foundation moves into a new chapter of its evolution, there will be a refreshing of the membership of the Board, which will include the chairman, Alan Cameron AO, stepping down. The Hon Justice Anna Katzmann, Cindy Penrose, David Field, Greg De Moore, Thomas Gaffney, Thomas Spohr, Melinda Upton and Mary Digiglio will remain on the Board and lead the Foundation into its next chapter. These individuals are passionate about continuing the Foundation's work in promoting and facilitating wellbeing in legal workplaces through the TJMF Guidelines, the annual lecture, stakeholder support and engagement and social media.

On behalf of those Board members, Cindy Penrose commented:

"This transition is a milestone event. It has been 10 years since TJMF was established and today the issue of psychological workplace health and safety and wellbeing is woven into the fabric of law firms, Government, corporations, the Bar, the Judiciary and the Courts. This achievement not only reflects the tireless energy and perseverance of Marie and George - it reflects significant positive change across the legal community.

We feel privileged to be the custodians of the Foundation. We will strive to lead and support psychological health and wellbeing for all of our current and future colleagues."

About the Foundation.

The Foundation is an independent, charitable organisation with the objective is to decrease work related psychological ill-health in the legal community and to promote workplace psychological health and safety. Since its beginnings in August 2008, the Foundation has been at the forefront of building greater awareness of depression and anxiety across all areas of the legal fraternity. The Foundation has established itself as a reference point and facilitator of information and research in the area of depression and anxiety in the legal profession.

The Foundation released the Workplace Wellbeing: Best Practice Guidelines to which around 200 legal workplaces in Australia and overseas have become signatories. The guidelines have also crossed professional boundaries with several healthcare workplaces choosing to become signatories.