

Peter Gordon is renowned both in Australia and overseas for his work on numerous landmark legal cases.

He has worked at the cutting edge of the rights of workers and injured people for nearly forty years. His pioneering efforts have resulted in financial compensation for thousands of men and women who otherwise would have lacked the resources to pursue their rightful claims.

Growing up in West Footscray, Peter attended primary and secondary school in Braybrook and graduated Dux of St John's College in Braybrook. He enrolled at the University of Melbourne Law School in 1976. After just two years he volunteered at the Williamstown Legal Referral Service, and this experience confirmed his ambition to be a lawyer for working people. He graduated in 1979.

As a law student, Peter started the Western Suburbs Legal Service in 1978. He initially worked there full-time and then part-time, pro bono, for the next six years.

Peter joined Slater and Gordon in 1980, helped open the Footscray office in 1984 and led the national expansion of the firm into Sydney and Perth in 1986. He later played a leading role in the establishment of the firm's first Queensland office. Between 1986 and 2003, he was the main driving force in establishing the national labor law firm profile of the firm.

He remained with the firm for around 30 years becoming partner in 1989, senior partner in 1995 and stepped down as Chair of the company when it publicly listed in 2007.

He resigned as a non-executive director of Slater and Gordon in 2009, leaving the firm in the strongest financial position and with the broadest representation of working people it had ever enjoyed.

In 1985, Peter obtained the first successful asbestos cancer damages verdict in Australia and since that time he has acted for over 2000 people in successful claims over asbestos-induced disease. His work for Wittenoom asbestos miners established the right of Australian workers to claim punitive damages from their employer, and also established the direct tort liability of parent companies whose guiding hand put the employees of their subsidiary companies in harm's way.

In 1990, Peter conducted the world's first medically acquired AIDS trial against a blood bank, eventually resolving all 566 medically-acquired HIV cases in Australia.

His work for Catholic Church sex abuse victims brought the first Australian mass legal challenge to the tort immunity claimed by the Catholic Church and Christian Brothers Orders.

Peter's work for women injured by defective breast implants over eleven years established a pathway for litigants outside the United States to bypass the automatic stay provisions of Chapter 11 of the US Bankruptcy Code and led to the first mass settlement against Dow Corning in bankruptcy. The High Court victory he achieved for Braybrook man Brian Crimmins established a precedent through

which hundreds of Australian waterside workers afflicted by asbestos disease, could recover compensation.

Peter's thirteen years of litigation against the tobacco industry, including for the US Department of Justice, exposed tobacco company documents practices found in courts in Australia and the United States to be fraudulent and provided valuable insights into how to litigate against big tobacco. The McCabe case led to law reform in Victoria to prevent abusive corporate destruction of evidence. Peter represented the Australian Council of Trade Unions and asbestos support groups victims in the 2003 James Hardie Inquiry. Peter subsequently worked with the ACTU to achieve a \$2billion settlement with James Hardie with present and future victims.

After leaving Slater and Gordon Peter commenced his own legal practice, Gordon Legal, and commenced a class action for Australian and New Zealand survivors of thalidomide. Peter's work challenged and re-defined the range of birth malformations, which are associated with thalidomide, and the class action eventually tripled the number of people in those countries to receive recognition and compensation as thalidomide survivors.

Throughout Peter's career he has been a passionate advocate for those who have found it difficult to obtain support, representing injured workers, claimants, consumers and aggrieved shareholders. Peter has a strong commitment to being a lawyer for the "little people" rather than big corporations.

Outside his legal career, Peter became the youngest ever President of an Australian Rules Football Club in 1989 when he became President of the then Footscray Football Club. He served as President from October 1989 to the end of 1996 season, returning to the Presidency in October 2012. Peter's leadership of the fight to save the Footscray Football Club, now the Western Bulldogs, from closure or merger is well documented.

In 2016 the Western Bulldogs won the AFL premiership after a 62 year premiership drought.

Peter served on the board of Vichealth for almost ten years and used his experience gained in this role to introduce ground-breaking men's and women's health programs to the Western Bulldogs Football Club.

In 2017, he was awarded an honorary doctorate in law by Victoria University.

In 2018, he was awarded an Order of Australia for services to Australian football, health promotion, youth social welfare and the law.

In 2018, he was also made an Adjunct Professor of Law at Victoria University.