



THE PURPOSE OF THE SLA IS TO ASSIST EACH OTHER IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION OF SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP.

SLA NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 8  
APRIL 2025

This newsletter will be published at minimum on a bi-annual basis in January and July. Content contributions are welcome, please forward these to Clive Dixon via [dixonfreelance@icloud.com](mailto:dixonfreelance@icloud.com)

## Operating Committee update

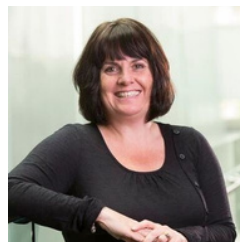
I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the 2025 System Leadership Association conference being held next month in Melbourne.

The Operating Committee has been working hard to develop what is shaping up to be a dynamic and diverse program, securing speakers from across a range of industries to share their experiences and insights. This includes application of SL in schools, the justice system, mining, hospitals as well as in a small to medium business.

We look forward to welcoming members to our pre-conference activities kicking off with the introduction to SL session on Thursday morning facilitated by the very engaging Mr Rod Barnett and followed after lunch by a workshop style class which will provoke discussion of SL application to a real life situation facilitated by the OC's very own Mr Tim Banner.

In addition to a jammed packed program we have plenty of opportunities to network and share learnings with drinks and canapes on Friday evening as well as the conference dinner at the conclusion of the program on Saturday evening.

Melbourne is starting to get chilly and by May there will definitely be a need to dress warm



**Katie O'Keeffe**  
**Operating Committee Chair**  
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## Conference 2025 Details

Registrations are open for the 2025 conference and will close on **1<sup>st</sup> May 2025**, please contact Emma via [enquiries@sldassociation.com](mailto:enquiries@sldassociation.com) to register:

**Venue: The Stamford Plaza Hotel, Melbourne Australia**

**Date: 15th - 17th of May 2025**

**Theme: Successful use and application of Systems Leadership.**

Similar to last year's conference the 15th of May will be a development day for members with the conference proper on the 16th and 17th.

## Dates

2025

- 17th April OC Meeting
- May 1<sup>st</sup> - Conference registrations close
- May 15th - 17th Annual SLA conference Stamford Plaza Melbourne
- June Date TBC OC face to face planning meeting
- 17th July OC Meeting
- 21 August OC Meeting
- 18 September OC Meeting
- 16 October OC Meeting
- 20 November OC Meeting
- 18 December OC Meeting

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## Conference agenda

We are finalising the agenda, including timings but are pleased to share with you the current planned speakers and topics for presentation:

- **Rod Barnett** Development day workshop 1 - Conducting a Systems & Symbols Audit (Organisational Review)
- **Tim Banner** Development day workshop 2- A case study approach to the successful application of SLT
- **Scott Forrester** - Case study - growing an SME using Systems Leadership
- **Warwick Mitchell** - Application of SL example - VCAT
- **Tracy Bell** - Metro hospital relocation
- **Paul Hemburrow** - Application example - Paladin Energy
- **Deborah Levya** - Application Example - Newmont
- **Mark Allen** - Case Study - coaching Education Leaders
- **Kellie Kremmer** - Social process audit
- **Emily McGuire** and **Chris Bartlett** - Systems Leadership Integration in a project management office
- **Fiona Chamberlain** - Personal experience in Systems Leadership Application
- **Ian McDonald** and **Angela O'Brien** - MAC and the CIC updates

Alongside the presentations we will also be running a members forum and interactive panel discussion.

## Conference timings

Registration for the Development Day workshops will begin at **8:30 AM** on **Thursday, the 15th**, with Workshop 1 starting at **9:00 AM**. The conference itself will commence with registrations at **8:30 AM** on **Friday, the 16th**, for a **9:00 AM** start. The event will conclude on **Saturday, the 17th**, at **4:00 PM**, followed by the conference dinner.

## Conference app

This year, instead of having a printed agenda for the conference we are going to be trialing a conference app - Event Leaf. We will also be using this app through the conference for interactive Q&A sessions. You will receive more information including an invitation to download the app in the lead up to the conference so please stay tuned.



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## Conference presenter biographies

On the following pages we are pleased to share with you the biographies for some of the speakers we have lined up for this years conference.

### Roderick Barnett



Rod founded Salient Consulting, and first worked with Systems Leadership in 1996. He has been associated with Macdonald Associates ever since, and Systems Leadership is at the core of most of his work. He enjoys working in a variety of organizational and cultural contexts. Rod is immensely grateful for the generosity and learning received from Systems Leadership associates and clients over many years. For 6 years he was the Vice

President of IODA (the International Organization Development Association) and is their ambassador for the Oceania region. In 2023 he received the Richard Beckhard award from IODA. He currently works on a committee which makes an annual award to practitioners applying O.D. to work of reconciliation and conflict resolution around the world. Rod is on the leadership team of O.D. Australia, which celebrated 25 years in 2024

### Tim Banner



Tim is based in Newcastle, Australia. Since 2009, he has consulted extensively in the public and private sectors in Australia and New Zealand. Previously, he spent 20 years in the UK within the Financial Services industry, and during that time, he held various leadership roles. His focus is helping leaders improve service delivery and culture.

He is the author of the book 'Reconceive: New thinking for progressive leaders to create productive, positively viewed service organisations'.

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## Kellie Kremmer



Kellie is a passionate educator and leader with over 28 years of experience across diverse settings. She has spent many years living and working in remote Indigenous communities across the Gulf, Cape, and Torres Strait. For over a decade, Kellie has applied a systems leadership approach in education, designing organisations and cultivating cultures that unite diverse groups into high-performing teams. She believes that strong systems create

clarity, enabling individuals and teams to navigate complexity, drive meaningful change, and sustain long-term success.

Recognising the post-COVID rise in anxiety among students and families from remote communities, Kellie expanded her expertise to holistic well-being. She became a certified yoga teacher specialising in trauma release, a practicing Emmett Therapist addressing chronic pain, and a qualified mindfulness coach. Viewing both organisations and the human body as interconnected systems, Kellie applies the principles of systems leadership to well-being. She emphasises the interplay between breath, the nervous system, and the brain in shaping resilience, health, and performance. Her clinic, Fluid Nation, helps clients' quiet external distractions through breathwork and mindfulness practices, fostering balance from within.

## Fiona Chamberlain



Fiona Chamberlain is a C-suite executive with a record of successful reform in public purpose organisations in Australia. Fiona has had an expansive career over four decades in state, territory, and commonwealth government organisations, and has led several major public policy, operational, and corporate reforms. In recent years, Fiona has worked throughout Courts Group – Vicotria's self-administered court system – as CEO of the County Court, COO of Court Services Victoria, and currently as CEO of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Together with the President of VCAT, Fiona is leading a generational strategic change process to renew the tribunal's purpose of providing equal justice, to improve its service performance, and to make VCAT a great place to work. Fiona is passionate about developing people's capability, driving purposeful organisational change, and building positive organisations.

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## Mark Allen



Mark Allen is a proud state school principal in Queensland, who is currently working in the Toowoomba Region with the branch called the Education Futures Institute in a role called 'School Improvement Coach'.

As an early career principal, Mark learnt about Systems Leadership Theory, and until very recently, is the only professional learning provided by his employer in relation to organisational leadership. Having learnt about and applied the SLT models and

tools now for about 12 years, Mark's keen interest in positive organisational culture is enhanced by the ongoing application of the work.

In this new role, Mark's been engaged in learning about an educational coaching model with Professor Viviane Robinson, called 'Leading by Learning'. There are many synergies between the models, however, the application of SLT tools are still the most pertinent. In his presentation, Mark will discuss the amalgamation of the two models, and the superior elements of SLT in the delivery of improved outcomes for students.

Join Mark (remotely) to hear of this interesting work, and engage in the conversation with peers about the application of SLT, in a workplace which works with 'other' model/s.

## Chris Bartlett



Chris's current role is the Operations Manager for Optivly, a subsidiary of Response Group International. Optivly is an Learning solutions company that specialises in digital learning leveraging current technology and helping to develop learning solutions such as media, eLearning, programs for external companies. As part of this I am also the Product Development Manager for Response Group, helping to design and manage the process for how the business Designs and Develops products for our own use.

Response Group has been involved in Systems Leadership for many years through the work founder Phillip Bartlett has delivered as a consultant. It is wrapped into a lot of our services and offerings as well as how we operate internally. Through my role I have leveraged many aspects of this including systems design and actively using models directly with my team, use them in my practice, providing team training sessions on core concepts, and embedding social process into our project work. As a team we have also worked on leadership programs that contain SLT material as part of the information we are designing and teaching.

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## Scott Forrester



Current role

Non Executive Director - Pulse Climbing  
Leadership and Organisational Development Consultant

**Engagement with Systems Leadership:**

2012 to 2015 - Associate Consultant

I worked with and supported a number of accredited Systems Leadership Practitioners on client projects including Working Together Programs, Social Process Skills for Leaders and Systems and Symbols Audit across the mining, steel manufacturing and stevedoring sectors. During this period, Rod Barnett and Rob Chaston in particular provided mentorship to me which played a significant role in developing my capability in Systems Leadership Theory.

2015 to 2024 - Pulse Climbing: An indoor climbing gym developer and operator in NSW

As a founder and non-executive director for the first 5 years that Pulse Climbing was in operation, I then took over the role of managing director in 2015 with the intention of scaling the business. I utilised my understanding of Systems Leadership Theory to lead the growth of the business over 9 years from 1 location with 12 employees to 4 locations with 90 employees. At the end of 2024 I stepped back from the managing director role into a non-executive director role to again pursue work as leadership consultant.

2025 - Leadership and O.D. consultant

Supporting the facilitation of Working Together Programs with Rod Barnett in his work with Boral.

## Tracy Bell



Change Manager, Systems Thinker, Curious Human

Tracy has spent the past 20 years helping teams make sense of complex organisational change—from digital transformations to high-stakes public sector projects, including the relocation of a major hospital. She’s held roles like CIO, Head of Delivery, and Head of Digital—but what’s always lit her up is understanding how systems change, and how people change within them.

About fifteen years ago (with a nudge from colleagues Tim Banner and Marc Galbraith), she stumbled into Systems Leadership Theory—and never looked back. She’s been quietly using its tools ever since: informally, organically, and often without a permission slip.

Tracy isn’t a consultant or a theorist. She works inside the system, in all its messy, human unpredictability. Her passion is turning big ideas into practical tools, helping teams find clarity in complexity, and reminding leaders that the real work of leading happens in everyday moments.

Expect stories, frameworks, a few laughs—and maybe a fresh way of seeing your role in the system.

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## Message from Macdonald Associates

Sorry we will not be there in person attending the SLA conference this year. It has been a particularly busy time for MAC as we have been engaged on a significant international project whilst also continuing to develop the work of the CIC. Therefore, we are very grateful for all your donations to the CIC. This has helped us to introduce SLT work into many schools in the UK. We are currently working with over 9 Education Trusts that lead over 100 schools of various sizes and contexts. We have also been able to look at the opportunities for joint working within the health and education sector in South Wales.

We have recognised the need for a more structured approach to accreditation and therefore we are introducing a revised programme. This will operate as a cohort-based model, offering participants a high-quality learning experience designed to enhance professional practice in the application of SLT. If you are interested in accreditation please visit our website, register your interest and we will be in touch. [www.systemsleadership.org.uk](http://www.systemsleadership.org.uk)

We will be sending a video with more information to be shown at the SLA conference.

Thank you for your continued support.

Ian and Angela

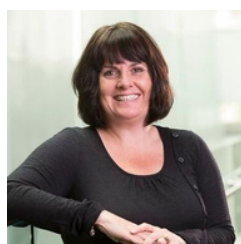


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## Current operating committee members



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**Phillip Bartlett**  
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