

Toihau | Neil Mallon appointed Utilities Disputes Commissioner (11 October 2023)

The Utilities Disputes | Tautohetohe Whaipainga (UDL) Board has appointed Neil Mallon as its new Commissioner | Toihau and Chief Executive Officer | Tumu Whakarae. Neil will take up the role on 11 December 2023 when Mary Ollivier departs. He is currently the Deputy Commissioner having joined UDL in September 2020.

“Neil is an excellent appointment to this role with his wide-ranging experience, knowledge of the sector and ability to lead by example. The Board is pleased that this will enable a seamless transition and ongoing stability for the vital work that UDL does,” said the Hon Heather Roy, UDL Board Chair.

Neil is a lawyer with extensive experience working with consumer complaints, regulating professionals, including banking industry complaints and fraud investigations.

He has managed prosecutions and appeals relating to the conduct of barristers in the UK and led the complaints and prosecutions team at the Teaching Council of Aotearoa before spending eight years with the New Zealand Law Society, including time as its General Manager of all regulatory functions. Neil has extensive experience in managing a legislative based complaints process and has drafted rules of conduct and client care for lawyers.

Neil is honoured to have the opportunity to lead a great organisation like UDL. “In our current environment there are more and more people who need to know about the services we offer. I am excited about our future at UDL and what we can achieve for all our stakeholders. Our strategy is simple - we are here to help, and we are doing that across Aotearoa in innovative ways.”

“On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge the huge contribution Mary Ollivier has made since January 2020,” says Chair Heather Roy. “Mary's impressive legal background and her ability to build strong relationships has been instrumental in improving trust and strengthening relationships between consumers and their utility providers. She has ably led UDL's dispute resolution services to include water and telecommunications. Mary has spearheaded UDL's Te Ao Māori journey incorporating tikanga into everyday practices at UDL. We wish her all the best.”

Established in 2002, UDL provides a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for electricity, gas, and water complaints as well as disputes about access to shared property for broadband installations. UDL also operates a voluntary and independent Telecommunications Complaint Scheme where it can consider complaints against companies that choose to be members of the scheme.

A recruitment process for the role of Deputy Commissioner will begin soon.

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More info

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