

# Richard Thwaites



## BACKGROUND

- **Professional Employment:** After university, I worked in the chemical industry in London, Sydney and Melbourne for 41 years, progressing to senior management and leadership roles in production, marketing, general management, and development & commercialisation of new technology. For several years I held senior roles in two CRCs, was a director of three CRC spin-off companies, and Chair of the Board of Trustees of my employer's superannuation fund. I retired in 2008.
- **RACI Involvement:** My membership of the RACI spans nearly 50 years. I was elected a Fellow (FRACI CChem) in 1994 and awarded a Citation in 2015. I served as Chair of the Qualifications and Accreditation Committee for 9 years. I have been active on the Victorian Branch Committee for many years, including roles as President, Treasurer and Secretary. I am Convenor of the Retirees' Group, a member of other Group Committees (FNAC, HS&E, etc.) and am a current Member of the "*Chemistry in Australia*" Management Committee.
- **Other:** I am currently Chair of the Australia Group of the Society of Chemical Industry, Deputy Chair of Ashburton Baptist Community Services Inc., Secretary of the Victorian Baptist Historical Society and a former President of the Council of Whitley College (University of Melbourne). I am a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (MAICD), Royal Society of Chemistry (CChem MRSC), Royal Society of Victoria (MRSV), and the Surface Coatings Association Australia (SCAA).

## RACI DIRECTION

- **The Voice of Chemistry:** If elected, I won't be a distant figurehead, but rather a hands-on leader, to ensure that the RACI voice is heard and not muted. I will listen to the voices of members and other stakeholders and will work diligently to enrich the RACI membership experience.
- **The Institute, its People, its Relevance and its Sustainability:** It is so disappointing to meet so many people who say they used to be RACI members. Probably fewer than 10% of eligible Australian chemistry graduates are current RACI members. I will take steps to follow up why former members leave, why they feel the RACI is no longer relevant. I will develop initiatives to both counter membership erosion and attract new members; my goal is to secure the RACI's future sustainability.
- **Post COVID-19:** Post COVID-19, how we all do business is going to change. The challenges for the Institute leadership are to be pro-active, to devise mechanisms to ensure ongoing attractiveness, and to find ways of supporting members who are adversely affected by the pandemic. My role, if elected, will be to spearhead, encourage and facilitate the new directions we'll need to take.
- **Inclusiveness, Diversity and Respect:** We respect all members, irrespective of gender, race, religion, sexual preference, disability or age. Further, we should not discriminate on grounds of employment. I will ensure that the Institute provides equal opportunities for all members to participate in RACI activities and to be recognised for their contributions to the Institute.
- **Continuous improvement:** I am not a slave to process, but will, if elected, monitor, review and report to members on the performance of the Board, Divisions and Branches to ensure Best Practice. My job, if elected, is to ensure the Institute is stronger at the end of my term than at the beginning.
- **Collaboration and cooperation:** Success will come from cooperation within the Institute among Members, Staff, the Board, Divisions, Branches and Groups, and collaboration with other societies with similar objectives. My role, if elected, will be to foster this cooperation and collaboration.