



Taking the lead in workplace safety

COMPANY boards have a powerful role to play in influencing the safety outcomes of the organisations they govern beyond pure compliance with relevant workplace safety legislation, experienced company director and QUT PhD researcher Kirstin Ferguson (*pictured above*) said.

Ms Ferguson, who is on the listed board of Dart Energy Ltd and is also the first female non-executive director of the Queensland Rugby Union Board, has undertaken an Australian-first study investigating the role of boards in driving safety outcomes within organisations.

Her Colin Brain Governance Fellowship, awarded through QUT Business School, recognises the research importance of

her study into corporate governance.

Ms Ferguson said the responsibility and liability of directors had been catapulted into the spotlight following new Workplace Health and Safety Acts and high-profile safety disasters including the New Zealand Pike River mine explosion and the 2011 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, where the role of the board had been addressed.

"One of the outcomes of this research will be to create a governance framework for best practice in terms of safety governance," she said.

Ms Ferguson graduated with a QUT Bachelor of Laws degree with honours in 2001.