

20 February 2021

The President  
Prime Dispute  
[www.primedispute.com](http://www.primedispute.com)

## **PAUL SILLS**

Thank you for asking me to provide a reference for Paul Sills.

I begin with a note about my own practice. I am the immediate Past President of the Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New Zealand ('the Institute'), and I have served on the Council of that organisation for the past decade. I remain the Director of Professional Studies for the Institute, in which capacity I am responsible for the delivery of all the Institute's professional assessment programmes. I am one of a reasonably small group of people in New Zealand who practice exclusively as an independent neutral party, whether that be as arbitrator, construction adjudicator or commercial mediator. I also teach in dispute resolution at AUT University. I am a Deputy Chairperson of the Health Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal.

I give that background to explain that I think I am in a good position to give a reference for Paul.

I have known Paul since the late 1990s, at which time my recollection is that he was not practicing law, but working in commerce. In the period since then, we have interacted in a number of different ways including:

- Paul has represented parties in a number of mediations in which I was the mediator;
- Paul has also been counsel in a number of arbitral matters in which I was the arbitrator, including one which went to a hearing recently and which involved a significant amount of time and effort;
- In 2019, Paul submitted himself for assessment as a Fellow of the Institute in Mediation. He was the outstanding candidate in that year, gaining the Anne Edge Memorial Prize for Excellence in the assessment process; and

- Just last year, Paul submitted himself for assessment as a Fellow of the Institute in Arbitration. Paul has once again demonstrated an exceptional level of professionalism and competence.

Paul Sills is a truly outstanding practitioner in the area of dispute resolution outside the courts. He is intelligent, articulate and very hard-working. He has a complete grasp of the principles which govern 'alternative' dispute resolution, and he has the both the insight and empathy to be able to assist clients in difficult situations. He embodies the 'More light, less heat' motto that he practices under.

In addition, it is my observation that Paul is a contributor. He has presented at Conference sessions, and he is always quick to volunteer to assist. I am delighted to say that, most recently, he has been appointed by the Council of the Institute as the Deputy Director of Professional Studies for Mediation.

Paul is an experienced and accomplished practitioner. I simply cannot recommend him highly enough.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Royden Hindle', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Royden Hindle**

LLB(Hons) (Cantuar), LLM (Cantab), FAMINZ