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As 2017 comes to a close, the Hunter is well positioned for sustained growth over coming years.

Many people and businesses in crowded major cities are realising that they can relocate to regional areas that have good infrastructure and have a better life-work balance, including significantly lower costs and reduced congestion.

The Hunter is ideally placed amongst regional areas to offer an ideal location to live and do business. It offers almost all the services of major cities but is still close to the nation's most populous city. With billions of dollars of investment, a world class university, excellent transport links and many other attractions, the Hunter is certainly raising its profile across Australia and even internationally as a region on the move.

As the publisher and editor of HBR, I have noticed a distinct change of attitude of people outside the Hunter when discussing our region. When HBR first commenced in 2005, most in Sydney associated the Hunter with just coal and wine, and some even still referred to Newcastle as a steel city. While coal and wine remain important parts of the Hunter economy, more and more people are coming to understand the diversity and potential of our region and show a great deal more interest in the Hunter.



Major events, such as the recent hugely successful Coates Hire Newcastle 500, have highlighted the region and helped to break down old preconceptions.

The region is truly in a great position for the future, particularly if we come together to fulfil the enormous potential whilst providing benefits for all sections of the community.

The team at HBR would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers, advertisers and story providers a very happy and restful Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

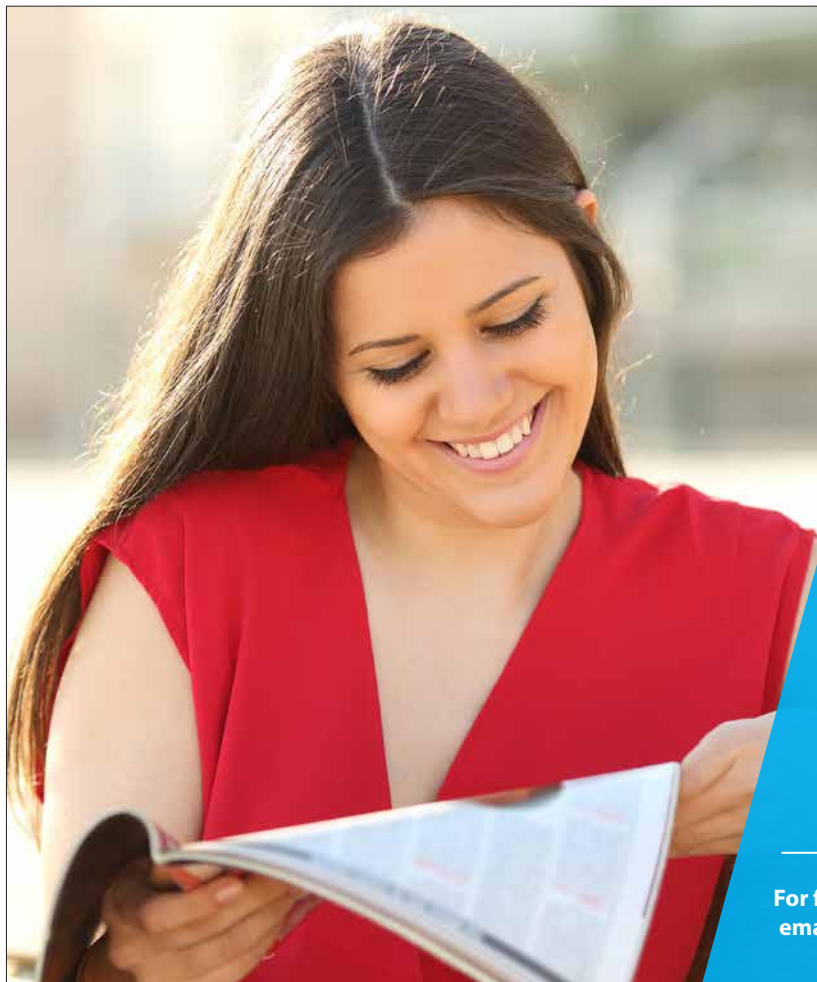
We look forward to continuing to serve the Hunter business community in 2018.

Garry Hardie
Editor & Publisher



ON THE COVER

Gillian Summers, Sandra Hinchey and Sophie Chaffey – three of the women featured in HBR's Women in Business feature commencing on page 29.



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New innovation facility launched at Williamstown

On 1 November Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald MLC helped launch the new defence, security, and aerospace hub at Williamstown which has been developed by the University of Newcastle with support of the NSW Government.

Mr MacDonald said the hub, named DSA-18, will support research and development of new innovative technologies to bolster the region's industries.

"The Hunter is already a NSW stronghold for defence but today's launch of this impressive new facility will see that take off even further," Mr MacDonald said.

"The DSA-18 Hub has been developed by the University of Newcastle with funding support from the NSW Government's Boosting Business Innovation Program.

"The Boost program is providing \$18 million to the state's universities – including \$1.5 million to the University of Newcastle – to work with businesses to drive innovation.

"The University of Newcastle is conducting exciting research in a range of areas relevant to the defence, security, and aerospace sectors and the DSA-18 Hub with its 18 seats will allow academics to work directly with business and industry.

"The Hub's strategic location at Williamstown Aerospace Centre will allow it to work alongside leading industry names like Raytheon Australia, Lockheed Martin Australia, and Boeing as well as cutting-edge smaller businesses and start-ups.

"The Hunter region's defence sector employs more than 4,600 people and contributes \$1.3 billion to the region's economy but the DSA-18 Hub will provide new impetus for innovation-led growth."

University of Newcastle Vice-Chancellor, Professor Caroline McMillen, said the DSA-18 Hub would provide an important platform to build on UON's strong research performance and

global reputation in defence, security and aerospace.

DSA-18 Hub is one of four innovation hubs in the Hunter, which together comprise the Integrated Innovation Network (I2N) - a University of Newcastle initiative established in 2016.

Building on the suite of existing I2N activities and capability-building programs, the DSA-18 Hub will host workshops and events designed to promote engagement between researchers, students, SMEs, prime industries, and the Australian Defence Force.



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ME Program provides students with commercial acumen

The Department of Defence funded ME Program is providing students from partner school, St Philips Christian College, with skills to innovate and commercialise their ideas by facilitating a workshop series with The Business Centre.

In a Hunter education first, RDA Hunter's ME Program is directing funding from the Australian Dept of Defence to bring The Business Centre and students from St Philips Christian College together for a workshop series that will help students understand the realities of developing, protecting and commercialising their intellectual property.

The Business Centre will provide students involved in ME Program and STEM subjects with techniques, skills and information to help them transition their ideas and prototypes to commercially available products.

Students will be mentored by Hunter entrepreneurs, meet innovative companies who will share their experiences of success and failure and learn the latest government protocols and much more over the seven month mentoring program.



In addition to supporting tourism and event promotion, The Newcastle Shop is also serving as the head office for the NEW Crew volunteers, the city's team of specialist visitor guides who promote Newcastle as a leading tourist destination. The strategy is for the shop to enable Council to better capitalise on events, maximise the visitor experience, and promote return visitation.

"Council's research has identified that there are 360,000 visitors who travel to Newcastle for events annually and 1.3 million people visit the region for the purposes of visiting friends and relatives," said Council's interim CEO Jeremy Bath.

"For this reason, The Newcastle Shop is targeted to both the local and inbound visitor market."

The five-month trial period for The Newcastle Shop will provide data upon which a decision can be made as to whether to make the concept a permanent part of the Museum. Feature events that will be supported during the trial period includes, Celebration of Cricket, Formula Powerboats, Surfest and the Australian Boardriders Battle.

The shop also supports visitors to the Newcastle Museum's major summer exhibitions Dinosaur rEVOLUTION and Spiders Alive & Deadly, and cruise ship visits from December through March.

The Newcastle Shop offers locally themed merchandise, stocking retail products that are either about Newcastle or crafted by Newcastle makers.

The Newcastle Shop offers one-stop visitor services over summer

A new pop-up retail business run by Newcastle City Council is offering a central location for visitor services in Honeysuckle during the city's peak tourism and event season.

Located in the former café space within Newcastle Museum, The Newcastle Shop is a place for visitors to find out where to go in Newcastle, buy a souvenir or have a cup of coffee, and sit comfortably while using free Wi-Fi to research things to do in Newcastle and the surrounding region. Sprocket Roasters, Newcastle's innovative, carbon conscious and award-winning coffee, is a fitting feature of the new shop.

Opened in November, the shop will continue to operate through to 31 March 2018 in order to provide visitor services throughout the busy summer season.

HBR eating out

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Novaskill Trainee of the Year

In a looming labour market of extensive skills shortages, Alliance Labour Solutions continues to ensure they are combatting the shortage by focusing efforts on training their people in all areas.

Eliza Thomson is an example of the training provided by Alliance and in July completed her certificate 3 in Business Administration. This training was completed through Novaskill Newcastle where she was recognised by Novaskill for her outstanding efforts which resulted in Eliza being nominated for Novaskill Trainee of the Year for 2017.

An awards ceremony was held in October for many different categories of which Eliza was successful in winning the award for trainee of the year.

Eliza was thrilled at her achievements in being named trainee of the year and contributes her success to hard study and Alliance giving her the opportunity to enhance her skills.

Alliance's General Manager Jason Barry was very proud of Eliza's achievements and her dedication to ensuring her studies were of a very high standard.

"With Eliza's results and focus, it was a simple decision to enrol her in the next course of Certificate 4 in Business Administration."

"Novaskill has been instrumental in Eliza's success with their support and professionalism. One of the main things that stood out to me was the personal approach with the way they conduct business and supported both Eliza and the Alliance team throughout her study period."

Jason went on to say, "Alliance is committed to train our people and assist our client base to upskill people in specific skill sets. Our major success has been through partnership with our clients that recognise the benefits of working closely together to upskill people."



Accounting Firm of the Year Award for Bottrell

At a function in Sydney on 2 November winners for the inaugural, state-based SMSF and Accounting awards were announced to a crowd of over 250 professionals. The SMSF and Accounting awards are the first of their kind in Australia, and recognise those professionals who are setting the benchmark for excellence in their provision of services to clients in their home state.

East Maitland based firm Bottrell Business Consultants took out the prestigious Accounting firm of the Year award.

"On behalf of the entire Bottrell Team I would personally like to thank our loyal clients, the Newcastle & Hunter community, and our family & friends that have supported us through this journey. Over the past 18 months in particular the firm has heavily invested in innovative technologies in addition to expanding our service offering to include Bottrell Wealth and Bottrell Media," Managing Director Gavin Bottrell said.

The judges commented on the exceptional quality of nominees this year, and particularly remarked on the efforts firms and individuals are going to with innovation and client servicing standards.



At **Alliance Labour Solutions** we create and drive a partnership which is sustainable in achieving our customers desired outcomes. Currently in our industry with the duration between shutdowns extending, utilising the permanent workforce has become increasingly difficult. At Alliance we help tailor optimum solutions to eliminate utilisation issues.

At **Alliance** we provide best fit employees based on your individual requirements. We engage with you to understand what 'type' of employee will add value to your business.

Alliance have an unrivalled Candidate Care Program, centred around employee wellbeing and continuous communication which has allowed us to enjoy a high retention rate which in turn gives you consistent faces on site.

We are uncompromising in our commitment to the wellbeing and safety of our people; we drive a safety culture and to continuously achieve this outcome we attend morning pre-starts and toolbox talks and adopt a 'go look see' program on site which is interactive with you and our employees.

Our partnership model promotes 'one team' that is seamless in its integration.



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Hunter-based project manager named as AFR Fast Starters

Catalyst Project Consulting has been named in the prestigious 2017 Australian Financial Review (AFR) Fast Starters list, as the 85th fastest growing start-up business in Australia.

Catalyst was established by Kris Leck in 2013 as a client side project management team and with business partner Anthony d'Arcy has to date completed 35 projects ranging from large commercial developments through to mixed-use and residential projects. Currently managing \$290 million in projects, the consultancy also provides tailor-made and cost-effective services that range from specific project elements, such as feasibility studies, through to complex end-to-end project and development management solutions for any size project.

An AFR Fast Starter must have started trading after 1 July 2013, be turning over greater than \$500,000 for the 16/17 financial year and must show independent verification of increasing revenue every year. The source of revenue can't come from one client or customer, government grants or start-up funding, and they must be Australian owned.

Catalyst director, Kris Leck, said that Catalyst was committed to refining their service offering and expanding sector coverage to meet peaks and troughs in the market.

Catalyst specialises in project, development management, town planning, feasibility studies, due diligence and construction consulting. It is located on the corner of King and Wolfe Streets in Newcastle and currently has a core team of six people.



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2018 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Commences: April 2018

Concludes: Fri 2nd November 2018 Awards evening

Venue: HunterNet Office located within PKF
755 Hunter Street, Newcastle

Price: \$3950 + GST for HunterNet Members
\$4850 + GST non members

PROGRAM FORMAT

- 12 Leadership topics
- Sessions conducted every 2nd Thursday 4pm-6pm followed by Networking Drinks
- Concludes with a 7 week team Project

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PKF named as SMSF leaders

David Henriksen, PKF's Self-Managed Super Fund (SMSF) specialist has won a prestigious award at the 2017 SMSF and Accounting Awards and been named as the SMSF Accountant of the Year for New South Wales.

David dedicates 100% of his work time to helping high wealth clients find innovative strategies to get the most out of their SMSF and meet their retirement and life goals whilst providing peace of mind. David's clients come from all across Australia, seeking David out as a leader in SMSF related advice. David is committed to being the best in his field.

Steve Meyn, Managing Director said, "A huge congratulations to David, it's a pleasure to see all of his hard work recognised by the top industry bodies. The energy and enthusiasm David brings to the firm is unrivalled. He cares deeply about his clients and ensures that he gives them the best advice he can. We are very lucky to have David here in the Hunter, helping our clients ensure they are living the life they want, today, tomorrow and every other day".

The awards recognise individuals and businesses that are making their mark in SMSF and accounting advice by championing professionalism, quality advice and innovation.

David was shortlisted as a finalist in the three categories of SMSF Adviser of the Year (PKF Wealth), SMSF Specialist Accountant of the Year (PKF) and SMSF Adviser Excellence Award by Australia's top publication for SMSF professionals.



David Henriksen SMSF Awards Winner



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Council planner wins NSW PIA Excellence Award

Lake Macquarie City Council's Manager Integrated Planning, Sharon Pope, has received a prestigious award at the 2017 Planning Institute Australia (PIA) Awards for Excellence.

Ms Pope was awarded a Commendation in the Planner of the Year category, in recognition of her contribution to local and regional communities over a 30-year career and her leadership within the profession.

Ms Pope was nominated for the award by the Hunter Regional Committee of the Planning Institute of Australia, which praised her willingness to take on challenging planning issues, such as climate-change adaptation, and work with communities on collaborative solutions. Council's pioneering approach to managing future sea level rise was previously recognised as a Hard Won Victory at the 2017 PIA National Awards for Planning Excellence.

"Under Sharon's leadership as Manager Integrated Planning for the past 12 years, Lake Macquarie City Council has not shied away from difficult planning decisions," Acting Director City Strategy, Kate Cramp said.

"Whether it is higher-density living, adopting disruptive technology or planning for climate change and sea-level rise, Sharon has provided steady leadership and professional expertise."



Businesses back to boom-time confidence levels

Businesses' confidence in the Hunter economy has strengthened further in the September quarter. Confidence for the next quarter and year for businesses is back to a level not seen since the start of the mining investment boom of 2009-10.

These results reflect the Hunter Research Foundation Centre's latest Hunter Region Economic Indicators, released at the Hunter economic breakfast on 24 November.

Dr Anthea Bill, lead economist for the HRF Centre, said that levels of confidence in the regional economy had also improved for Hunter households. Optimistic households outnumbered pessimistic ones in the short-term outlook for the first time since 2011.

"The biggest improvement was in the household sector's confidence in the region's economy, however businesses continue to have a more positive view of the region's economic prospects than consumers," Dr Bill said.

"Optimism is likely due to improvements in the labour market, strong performance of the region's housing market, and perhaps assisted by the recent rally in thermal coal markets."

Bill sounded a note of caution, despite the optimistic outlooks. "Household debt, underemployment, and a slowing of growth in residential construction and in house prices all pose challenges to the regional outlook in 2018."

The HRF Centre also released new survey data on Hunter businesses' use of information and communication technology at the November breakfast.

Third stage of Stockland Green Hills redevelopment launched

The third stage of the \$414 million redevelopment of Stockland Green Hills Shopping Centre was launched on 30 November, unveiling a new section of mall with more than 75 new retailers.

At the heart of the growing mall is a new 5,900 sqm full-line Target offering the latest instore design and technology for customers.

A collection of new fashionable outlets includes Ally Fashion, Taking Shape, W Lane, Rockmans, Lorna Jane, Secrets Shhhh, Michael Hill, and Novo Shoes. Universal Store, Connor, The Athlete's Foot, Y.D, Ed Harry, Tarocash and InSport also provide an array of casual, sport and formal wear.

Toys and technology are also well covered in time for Christmas with EB Games Zing Pop Culture, The Games Shops and Build-A-Bear opening their doors as well.

Upon completion in mid-2018, the centre will more than double in size to around 74,000 sqm and will feature the first new look David Jones department store in the Hunter, a new Target discount department store, a new 900 seat Hoyts cinema and around 220 tenancies with a vibrant new dining and entertainment precinct that will be the biggest and best in the region.




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Smart city funding for Newcastle

Newcastle City Council has welcomed a \$5 million Australian Government grant to deploy digital technology to make it easier to move around the city and run it more efficiently.

The Smart Move Newcastle project, part of Council's Smart City vision, will integrate digital technology in vehicles and infrastructure to deliver a more convenient multi-modal transport system and yield productivity and energy efficiency gains.

In addition to the \$5 million contribution, Newcastle City Council together with partners will contribute \$10 million. Key city partners include Keolis Downer, the University of Newcastle, Eighteen04, CSIRO and RDA Hunter

The federal funding will support a range of initiatives including:

- A pilot electric vehicle hub on the city fringe with chargers for electric cars and e-bikes for hire
- On-demand bus transport offering a more personalised service
- Autonomous vehicle trials
- Bus stops with technology to provide users with real-time information, such as when the next bus is due and how many seats are available
- Roads and intersections with real-time traffic analysis to give emergency vehicles green lights and commuters a heads up on traffic jams
- Inroad sensors to provide data on parking availability via apps
- Sensors in buildings to monitor and manage energy use and provide business insights
- Cameras in smart light poles to analyse cloud coverage and estimate solar energy production

The announcement follows the NSW Government's \$10 million commitment to the \$17.8 million Hunter Innovation Project (HIP) in September last year.

The HIP is now delivering smart city infrastructure throughout Newcastle's CBD and will establish an innovation hub for researchers, industry and entrepreneurs to commercialise ideas and promote economic development.



Assistant Minister for Cities, The Honourable Angus Taylor, and Newcastle City Council Interim CEO Jeremy Bath



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A fresh approach to family law for Newcastle

Farrar Gesini Dunn (FGD) has specialised in family law for more than 20 years and are now open for business in Newcastle. With existing offices in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne, FGD are hoping to bring a fresh approach to family law in the Hunter region.

FGD specialises in all aspects of family law and estate planning, such as division of relationship property, superannuation splitting, parenting arrangements, divorce, child support, binding financial agreements and estate matters.

FGD brings a fresh approach with an active focus on out-of-Court settlements, with the support and capacity of a national firm.

The Newcastle office will be headed by Director Robert Routh and Senior Solicitor Victoria Blakeley. Robert has over 25 years of experience specialising in family law and is able to help people identify what is important, take complex problems and generate practical solutions. Robert was previously a Registrar of the Family Court, giving him a wealth of experience in both court and settlement matters. Robert supports the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution, and is a registered Dispute Resolution Practitioner in Family Law.

Victoria has been with FGD since the start of her career, previously working as an Associate with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Victoria has experience with a whole range of parenting matters and strives to resolve disputes with bespoke solutions tailored to the individual client and family. Victoria has experience with complex property matters, including those involving businesses, family trusts, farming enterprises and self-managed superannuation funds.

Both Robert and Victoria are trained collaborative lawyers, which provides them with the problem solving skills and commitment to resolving matters without needing to involve the Court.

Funding for energy saving upgrades in Newcastle

Heritage listed T&G Building and Civic Railway Workshops Group in Newcastle will share in \$150,000 in NSW Government grants to help slash the building's energy bills, Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald MLC has announced.

Cedtory Pty Ltd will receive \$100,000 to upgrade and replace ageing air conditioning systems with energy efficient systems to all levels of the T&G Building at 45 Hunter Street, Newcastle. The new system will be controlled through a basic Building Management System (BMS).

Newcastle City Council will receive \$50,000 to repair and upgrade existing standard lighting to more energy efficient LED for energy and maintenance savings at the Civic Railway Workshops Group at 6 Workshop Way, Newcastle.

The Government is providing funding for energy upgrades to state and locally listed heritage items because it recognises the challenge with retrofitting older buildings with energy efficient appliances and equipment.

The funding program was open to owners of state heritage listed buildings and buildings listed on council Local Environment Plans.



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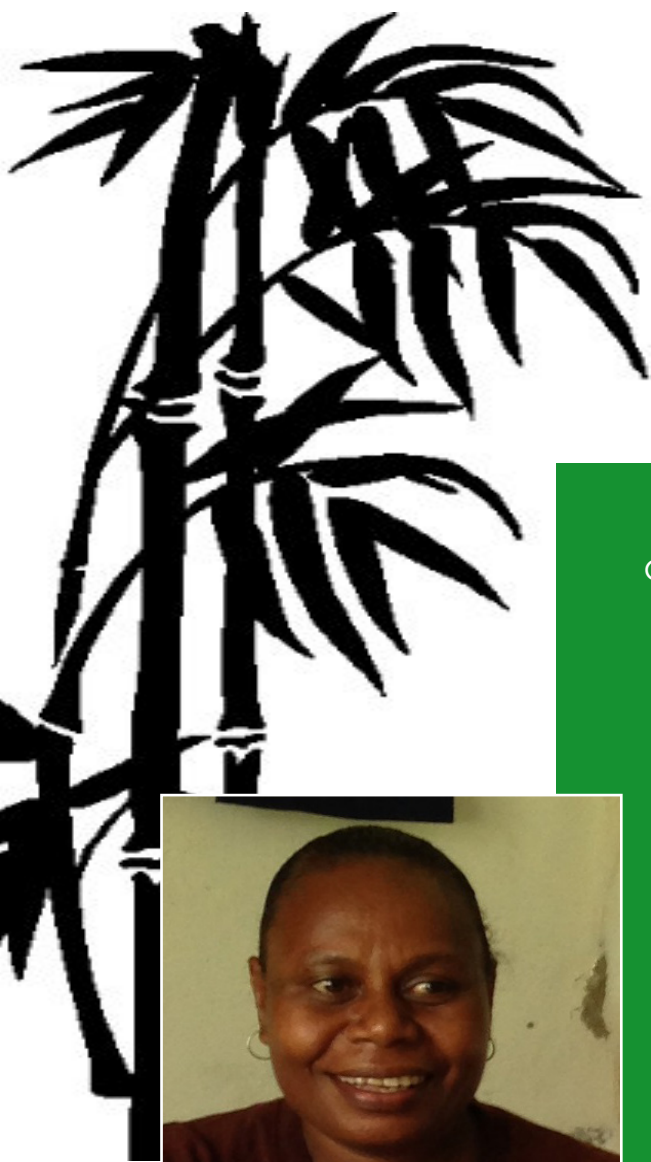
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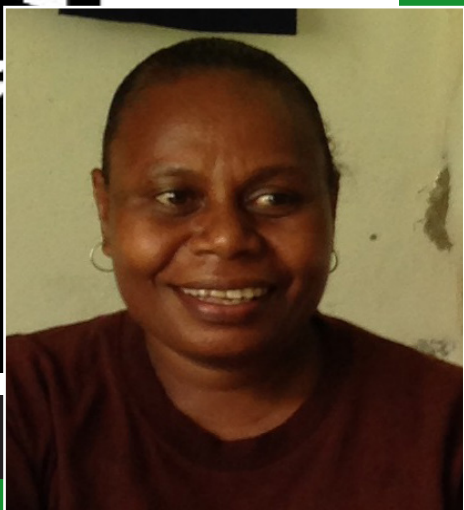
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We have current projects in Vietnam (teaching people like Pham Quang Anh process and necessary skills for early management of road accidents and a massage business run by blind people) and Vanuatu (a community clothing sewing project empowering women like Pauline and developing the community).

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University Network to Drive NSW Defence

The NSW Government will invest \$1.25 million in a new university-led network to bolster defence-related research and development activity across the state.

The new Defence Innovation Network will bring together leading scientists and engineers from seven of the state's public universities to focus on areas crucial to Australia's defence needs.

Minister for Trade and Industry, Niall Blair said the Network will build on NSW's extensive defence industry capability and bring to life the next generation of Australian defence technology.

"This Network will act as a broker – one where it can hear the problems facing industry and find the right people in our universities to solve them," Mr Blair said.

"It's set to tackle challenges in fields such as autonomous and unmanned systems, signal processing, weapons and communications.

"This initiative is a bold statement to Australian and international defence firms that NSW has the necessary expertise and is a good place to invest." The University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University, the University of Sydney, the University of Newcastle, the University of Wollongong, Western Sydney University and UNSW Sydney are the founding universities involved in the network.

NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer Mary O'Kane said the Defence Innovation Network demonstrates the capacity of our universities to be big problem solvers.

"This will provide an opportunity to tackle important and complex issues," Professor O'Kane said.

"The Network will also complement two other research networks already established by the Government."

Defence NSW Director and former senior naval officer, Commodore Peter Scott CSC RANR, said the establishment of the Network will support innovation, commercialisation and job creation, particularly in our regional communities.

University of Newcastle Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation, Professor Deborah Hodgson said the initiative would bring together academic institutions and industry in NSW to undertake collaborative, cross-disciplinary research, to find solutions to Defence's technology challenges.

Making it easier to do business in Lake Mac

Lake Macquarie City Council's new partnership with the NSW Government makes it easier to set up a cafe, restaurant or small bar in Lake Macquarie.

Council's Manager Organisational Performance, Laura Kendall, said that for many small businesses, one of the biggest challenges they face is navigating all the rules and regulations, and too often plans are slowed down by unnecessary red tape. This is where the Easy to do Business service, with its My Business Navigator tool, can help.

Before Easy to do Business, it could take many months to start a cafe, restaurant or small bar, dealing with Council and up to 12 state and Commonwealth government agencies to complete more than 30 forms. Under this program, the aim is for local businesses to open their doors in 90 days or less.

"By using this new service, business owners can spend more time planning their business and less time filling out forms, in turn creating jobs and growing the Lake Mac economy," Ms Kendall said.

"Anything that makes it easier to start or grow a business is very welcome in our City. The Easy to do Business program is set to enhance the growing range of cafes and restaurants we have in our town centres, as well as motivate anyone who is thinking about starting a new business." Service NSW also has plans to expand the program beyond restaurants and cafes to other business sectors in the future.



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Triple trophy win for Conveyancing Services

Conveyancing Services have won three top awards in the last two months, one for each business partner and one for the company itself.

Natalie Mason was awarded Business Woman of the Year at the Hunter Region Business Hub Awards in September, and Conveyancing Services were the winners of the Professional Services Award. Tony Morris then won the President's Award for best practice and professionalism at the Australian Institute of Conveyancers - NSW Division annual awards night in Sydney in October. Tony has long been held in high regard within the Conveyancing profession and his win was acknowledgement of his exemplary career.

Natalie and Tony are co-owners of Conveyancing Services. Both business partners worked at the company before purchasing the business five years ago. They are both proud and humbled of how far Conveyancing Services has come.

Tony Morris has been part of Conveyancing Services since it opened in 1986. Natalie Mason has been part of the business for the last 17 years. She started in the office and obtained her conveyancing licence 10 years ago.

Tony and Natalie are also committed to giving back to their community. To celebrate a milestone birthday for the business last year they decided to do 30 acts of kindness, incorporating staff and the local community. Conveyancing Services are also proud sponsors of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.



Singleton's dedication to recycling has again been recognised after the Garden Organics service took out the Waste Less Recycle More category in the Blue Star Sustainability Awards run by Keep NSW Beautiful. Operated in partnership with Maitland and Cessnock councils and introduced earlier this year, the Garden Organics service saw the rollout of a new green bin for most households to dispose of green waste material such as grass clippings and tree branches to be made into mulch. Singleton has shown to be one of the most dedicated services to reusing green waste, recycling 96 tonnes in the month of September alone

and registering one of the lowest rates of contamination in NSW at 0.05% compared with the State average of 4%.

Mark Ihlein, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning, said the Blue Star Sustainability Awards considered civic pride, community spirit and future planning in recognizing the best projects and programs running in NSW communities.

There are nine different award categories, each with a regional and metropolitan winner.

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New pipeline below Swansea Channel delivers water security

Hunter Water is drilling a 300 metre long, 20 metre deep tunnel beneath Swansea Channel as part of a \$3 million project to improve water security for residents in the Swansea area.

Around 4,500 properties south of Swansea Bridge in suburbs including Swansea, Caves Beach and Nords Wharf receive their water from a single water main laid on the floor of the channel. If it were to break in the underwater section, every home, school and business in the area would be without water for up to a week due to the difficulty of having to make the repairs under water.

Hunter Water Executive Manager for Investment and Innovation Darren Cleary said the new pipeline would give Swansea residents the water security expected in the modern age.

"There are 4,500 properties south of Swansea Bridge including homes, schools and businesses relying on us at Hunter Water to ensure they have a steady supply of safe drinking water.

"The nature of supplying water to the area means we need to transport it across Swansea Channel. With Swansea Bridge opening regularly for boat traffic in and out of Lake Macquarie, services like water have been laid on the channel floor using the best technology of the day.

"If the current pipeline breaks in the underwater section at Swansea Channel, it could take a week to repair using divers and underwater equipment. Hunter Water would then have to send a pipe across Swansea Bridge during the evening to refill the reservoirs while repairs were underway.

"Although the reservoirs in Swansea and nearby suburbs are larger than most, our modelling shows some residents would run out of water within 24 hours of a break.

"To remove the risk of residents running out of water, a second pipeline is being tunnelled underground from Little Pelican to Swansea using a technique called 'horizontal directional drilling'. Residents will have two connections to Hunter Water's network, essentially providing a safety net in case of a break."

The project will be completed by Christmas.

\$7.73 million Singleton Regional Livestock Market taking shape

The \$7.73 million transformation of the Singleton Regional Livestock Market is taking shape as the centrepiece of the project - a 5,100 sqm roof over the Northern Yard was completed in October.

Installation of the 1 mm thick zincalume ARAMAX roof sheeting has been a structural marvel, with one of only up to three mobile plants in Australia at the Gresford Road site to fabricate the 70 m long V-shaped panels that are then lifted and bolted into place.

The system is the same that was used to construct Sydney's Olympic Stadium, reducing the structural steelwork from 1,000 tonnes to 220 tonnes and significantly cutting the cost of the project.

Funded by a \$6 million grant under the State Government's Resources for Regions program and an additional \$1.73 million from Singleton Council, the project is well on track for completion ahead of schedule in February 2018.

With the roof complete, Mr Egan said walkways, a new water supply and rainwater harvesting system, LED lights, new or refurbished cattle handling gates, upgrade to the sites power reticulation and new stainless steel drinking troughs would follow.

The Gresford Road intersection and entrance to the facility is also being upgraded.

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Newcastle Cruise Terminal plans released



The NSW Government and Port of Newcastle have revealed the design of the new Newcastle Cruise Terminal which will transform the cruise passenger experience in Newcastle. The purpose-built facility will cover approximately 3,000 sqm and will include facilities for passenger drop-off and pick up, coach parking and vessel provisioning.

Port of Newcastle's CEO, Geoff Crowe, said the Newcastle Cruise Terminal would provide a professional transit experience for passengers arriving in Newcastle and a positive first impression of the city.

"We are excited to share the concept design for the Newcastle Cruise Terminal which reflects Newcastle's position as a world-class cruise ship destination. The traveller experience is central to GHD Woodhead's design, with harbour views, ease of movement, natural daylight and a generous sense of spacing greeting passengers.

"The new cruise terminal, to be built at the Channel Berth, will enable the Port to receive more and larger cruise ships in the future. Importantly, it will position Newcastle as a home port where ships can start and finish their destination in Newcastle. Eventually cruise visits could also be aligned with major events, such as the Supercars, adding another dimension to the visitor and tourism experience," said Geoff.

"According to the Australian Cruise Association's estimates, cruise shipping in Newcastle currently injects around \$11 million per annum to the local economy. Homeporting has the potential to deliver even more economic value to the region via more cruise ships and more visitors and the opportunity for local businesses to provide goods and services for the provisioning of vessels."

The \$12.7 million Newcastle Cruise Terminal is funded by the

NSW Government's Restart NSW Hunter Infrastructure Investment Fund. The design was unveiled by the Parliamentary Secretary for Planning, the Central Coast and the Hunter, Scot MacDonald, who said the Newcastle Cruise Terminal would be a major boost for the Hunter's tourism sector.

"The Newcastle Cruise Terminal is a big win for the region and a key part of Newcastle's revitalisation. It cements the city as an international cruise destination and will deliver flow on benefit to the region's already thriving tourism industry. Additionally, it complements the increased capacity of Newcastle Airport," said Scot.

"The NSW Government has contributed \$13.1 million towards the \$13.5 million Newcastle cruise upgrades. The Hunter Research Foundation has estimated the projects will contribute around \$26.7 million to the local economy and an additional 76 jobs through construction and flow-on effects."

Geoff said he was thrilled to share the design with the community after many months of detailed planning.

"Throughout the design process, Port of Newcastle has worked with the cruise industry, tourism representatives and Australian border agencies to factor in their requirements.

"Unveiling the design is a significant step and it is only going to get more exciting from here. Construction will commence in early 2018 and Novocastrians will have a cruise terminal to call their own by the end of next year," said Geoff.

"We look forward to welcoming the Explorer of the Seas on her maiden visit to Newcastle in February 2019 – the largest cruise ship to visit our port carrying 3,900 passengers."

The principal contractor will be appointed in early 2018.

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STEVEN SMITH



"We often hear the Hunter described as a living case study on how a region can collaboratively respond to disruptions thrown in its path and then embrace the opportunities that such disruptions create."

1. In a few words tell us about your current role

My current role is Managing Director of Advitech – an engineering and environmental consulting firm. I have overall responsibility for the services we provide in engineering design, project management, risk management, functional safety, sustainability and environmental management.

I'm also a director of two other Advitech Group companies – Novecom and Simulation Modelling Services.

2. How have you reached this point in your professional life?

My working career started with Tubemakers of Australia as an engineering trainee where I worked across production, maintenance and engineering departments whilst completing a degree in mechanical engineering part time. At the time I didn't appreciate just how that hands-on experience would support my career development.

After ten years at Tubemakers the division I worked for was closed down. I was offered positions in Adelaide, Melbourne ... or the gate and I chose the latter. I was fortunate to join A.Goninan & Co in the Heavy Engineering Division where I had project management responsibilities for projects in the mining, power generation and satellite communication sectors.

In 1990 I was invited to join what is now Advitech as manager of the Projects Group. Since that time I have enjoyed a very diverse range of work with some really inspiring people – both in-house and with clients. That work and the associated experiences prepared me for my current role as Managing Director.

As was custom at the time, 40 years ago I thought I was going to have a job for life at Tubemakers. I certainly had no idea that one day I would be part owner of a group of companies completing projects throughout Australia and overseas and having a ball doing it.

3. When you not a work, where will we find you?

Generally you will find me outdoors – working in the garden, walking at the beach, swimming at Port Stephens or dining by the lake. Part of my time outside of work is devoted to my role as Chairman of Hunter Manufacturing Awards.

4. Where do you find inspiration?

I gain inspiration from seeing the achievements of others – whether that is people I have met or people I have read about or seen on television. When I see someone who has succeeded really well at whatever they might have done, something stirs inside of me saying 'you can do even better'. And that is a very powerful motivator for me. That relates to many aspects of my life, not just work.

5. What advice would you give to someone just starting out in your field?

Don't be afraid to 'get some grease under your finger nails' in the early stages of your career. As a mechanical engineer you can't underestimate the longer term benefits to be gained from throwing yourself into an operational or maintenance role in a living engineering environment – whether that be a manufacturing plant, power station, coal mine and many others. You need to experience not only the technical aspects of engineering, but the interpersonal challenges of dealing with people before you pursue supervisory or management roles.

Also accept that you don't always know everything and that you can learn a lot just by listening and observing. I've learnt just as much about what not to do as I have what to do by watching the behaviour of others and the resulting outcomes.

6. What's something most people don't know about you?

In my last two years of high school I had the opportunity to go cross country skiing in the Snowy Mountains. As part of one trip we skied to Mt Kosciuszko and as we approached the summit a white-out rolled in. I found myself at the top of Australia unable to see anything.

One day during that trip we were unable to venture too far from Seaman's Hut due to bad weather. To fill in time we were tasked with building snow caves or igloos. My group chose the igloo. Our finished structure looking something like the real thing and I got to sleep in it. It was surprisingly comfortable. I don't know if I would be so keen now. A warm fire and glass of something is more my style now.

7. How would you like to see the Hunter evolve over the next decade?

We often hear the Hunter described as a living case study on how a region can collaboratively respond to disruptions thrown in its path and then embrace the opportunities that such disruptions create. We have been doing that for many years and can be justly proud of it.

There are currently many people and organisations in this region that genuinely want to see good things happen in terms of STEM based skills development, research excellence, entrepreneurial innovation, greater diversity in our manufacturing base and the corresponding economic growth and other benefits coming from that.

In support of those objectives I believe there is an opportunity for closer alignment between the various regional industry groups and representative bodies to present a common voice to State/Federal governments on matters important to the Hunter. In saying that, I'm not suggesting those industry groups and representative bodies lose their identities as they each provide very different and important roles for their members. However, a 'singular voice' to strategic regional issues could yield a powerful lobbying outcome for the Hunter.

8. What's your favourite Hunter restaurant/café/bar?

I really enjoy The Beach Hotel at Merewether in summer.

9. Are you reading anything at the moment?

I'm currently reading a biography on Elon Musk

Need a break?

Revitalise with a weekend away

Working 9 to 5, five days a week (for some people longer) can become stressful when you add the build-up of personal commitments and family obligations.

Everyone would love to take a long holiday but some business people just can't get the time.

A great alternative is to take a few relaxing weekends away. A weekend away can help you to revitalise, relax and recharge before the week ahead.

According to research commissioned by Choice Hotels Asia-Pac, one of Australia's largest hotel franchise groups, over two thirds (67%) of Australians are feeling stressed and in need of more breaks from the daily grind.

This was ranked above exercise, alcohol, shopping, sleep, a bath, food and even sex! This was the top response for both men and women, and across all ages, professions and regions.

The 'Need A Break' Report identifies regular short break holidays as the number one preferred solution to relieving stress.

CEO of Choice Hotels Asia-Pac, Trent Fraser, said it wasn't surprising that Australians were feeling stressed and in need of a break. "We know from independent research that Australians are guilty of banking annual leave throughout the year, with more than a third having four or more weeks' accrued", said Mr Fraser. "Our own research corroborates this, with 62% of Aussies saying that work related pressures are preventing them from getting away and this led to almost a quarter of us (24%) not taking a single short break in 2016"

Even outside of the workplace, Australians don't seem to be taking a break, with 40% of families with teenagers agreeing they couldn't get away because of activities and other commitments.



"Our research showed that after a short 1-3 night short break, 75% of people felt they had a greater balance back in their lives, almost two thirds (59%) of people felt happier and almost half had a closer connection with their partners and kids, so there is no doubt about the benefits," Mr Fraser added.

You can gain access to these results from www.needabreak.com/research/

A great way to organise a weekend away is to plan it around an activity.

There are a broad range of activities available in the Hunter you can organise your weekend around, including theatres, wineries, resorts, beaches and many other attractions and activities. With excellent flight connections from Newcastle Airport, you can also look at a few days in locations such as Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

Once you have chosen an activity the rest of the weekend falls into place a lot easier.

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Using your mobile overseas

Jason Duncan
Hunter Business Review

If you are not careful when using your phone overseas the bill can become higher than the cost of your flight.

When traveling overseas your phone uses International roaming. This is when your mobile connects to a local network overseas while still being billed by your usual home mobile service provider. The most expensive part of this situation is the international phone calls and data usage.

Here are a few options to make sure you don't receive an unexpected phone bill when you get back from your holiday.

1. Wi-Fi

The cheapest option while travelling is to turn data roaming off completely and use Wi-Fi hotspots.

Most hotel lobbies, airports, restaurants and cafes have free Wi-Fi for their customers.

A great app to download before you leave on your trip is Whatsapp. Whatsapp allows you to make phone calls and text using internet data which is great for traveling where Wi-Fi is available.

Make sure you save your holiday photo sharing for when you have free Wi-Fi.

2. Buy a local pre-paid SIM when you arrive

Your next cheapest option is to purchase a local prepaid SIM when you arrive. Pricing will depend on the country but it will usually be cheaper than using your mobile data. You can buy these at the airport and these retailers deal with tourists all the time so you know it will be reliable. The down side is it only really works out if you are staying in one country. You will also need to let people know your new number.

For this option you will need to make sure your phone is unlocked from your network.

3. Buy a roaming pre-paid SIM before you travel

If you are travelling to more than one country it's an idea to research and buy a SIM before you go as some places sell SIMs for multiple countries and this way you can also research the best deal.



Another plus is you can give your contacts your new number before you leave.

Again you will need to make sure your phone is unlocked for this option.

4. Buy pre-paid roaming from your mobile provider

The more expensive option is to purchase an international data roaming pack from your mobile carrier before you go. If you know you cannot survive without the internet (eg still need to do business as you are travelling) and want to keep your normal phone number this is the safest option as you will know you can use your phone.

Pricing of these packs will all depend on your provider, the country you are going to and for how long.

For further information contact Jason on 4925 7760 or email jason@hbrmag.com.au



Jason Duncan is the Content Manager at the Hunter Business Review and an avid traveller.

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How to win the holiday battle as a small business owner

Andrew Spring
Jirsch Sutherland

As the holiday season quickly approaches, many Australian small businesses find themselves under increased pressure, due to increased competition, staff holidays, supplier shut down periods, cashflow headaches and unforeseen outgoings. Following are a few tips and tricks to help Small Medium Businesses (SMBs) keep their head above water.

Studies showing that 60% of businesses fail in the first year, Christmas can be incredibly testing for SMBs and it can either make or break a business that's just starting out.

We see first-hand the pressures that business owners face at this time of year. The holiday season can take its toll, both financially and emotionally but there are simple steps that can be taken to not only survive but thrive throughout the festive season.

To add to the stress, recent research [Dun and Bradstreet, Business Expectations Survey, 2017] also reveals uncharacteristically low business expectations for Q4 2017, despite businesses usually heading into the fourth period with high hopes. The research suggests that businesses could be set for a very slow end of year, and start of 2018.

If small businesses rely on a surge over Christmas, from consumers buying goods for gifts or gearing up for a big start to 2018, it can be demoralising, not to mention stressful to not achieve forecasted goals. The key is to set realistic expectations on the businesses performance, and then to plan for the unexpected in any event.

Six survival tips for the festive season:

1. Collect your dues: Make a note of your clients who are sitting on outstanding invoices and deal with late payers so you can get that cash in your bank account before the holidays. Don't be afraid to pick up the phone and politely yet firmly request payment.

2. Declutter: Avoid paying interest on stale inventory or hoarding last season's stock by selling it at a discounted price to get it out the door. Even if you move it at cost or for a loss, liquidating is a lot better than keeping your money tied up.

3. Shut up shop: If most of your clients are shutting up shop for a week or two, it might be financially sensible for you to follow suit, or at least maintain skeleton staff. There's no point incurring the costs required to keep your business operating if times are quiet.

4. Tighten your belt: In the lead up to the New Year, take a close look at your business expenses and your debt to see how you can manage your money more wisely. Due to the seasonal impact on trading for most businesses, this is the most important time to understand your cash-flow. Understanding your fixed and variable costs will allow you to adequately provide for any slow-down in trading.

5. Recharge the batteries: Burning out isn't going to help your business. Scheduling a bit of downtime can do you and your staff the world of good by helping to clear your head. Use the time to think about what you want to achieve in 2018 and set the foundations for a plan on how you hope to get there.



6. Have a contingency plan: Before you close the door and head off on your break, have a contingency plan in place in case of events such as client emergencies, power outages or IT failures. Planning ahead will ensure a restful, well deserved break.

Businesses who have concerns about managing the requirements of the holiday period should seek professional help as soon as possible. Options do exist and it's important to explore them. Put simply, it's important to speak with your advisers - accountants, legal representatives or an insolvency specialist - before it's too late.

For further information contact Jirsch Sutherland on (02) 9236 8333, email AndrewS@jirschsutherland.com.au or visit www.jirschsutherland.com.au



Andrew Spring has more than 17 years' experience in corporate recovery and insolvency, gained through work in the UK, Europe and Australia. He has a wealth of experience in all facets of domestic and international business restructuring and insolvency. His specialist skills include independent business reviews, reconstruction and turnaround consulting, business sales and asset divestment, profitability reviews, cross-border insolvency, and all forms of corporate insolvency appointments.

Five things I have learned since opening a Burger Urge franchise

Chris Schafferius
Burger Urge

After discovering Burger Urge on a family trip to Brisbane, I became curious about the brand and decided to open my own franchise. Here are five things I learned since opening Burger Urge Newcastle, NSW first Burger Urge restaurant.

1. Understanding the industry

Prior to opening my restaurant, I worked as a General Manager for a mining equipment company so, aside from general business, there was little crossover in knowledge. The hospitality industry is unique compared to any other industry which was a big learning curve for me. Prior to purchasing, I set out to absorb as much industry knowledge as I could, and making use of Burger Urge HQ was key.

2. Passion is key

Something I considered very carefully before starting this journey is if I would love what I do. It's easy to just follow the money but having the enthusiasm to wake up and motivate myself and others daily requires passion. Every time I walk into a Burger Urge, I am always impressed with the culture and energy. I think this is key to maintaining overall growth of the business and being able to enjoy the rewards that hard work brings.

3. Importance of company support

Company support is crucial when starting your own business. I found that a franchise is a much less scary option when considering building my own business because you are buying into a well-established brand. Burger Urge has a great reputation and the support provided has built me up for success and educated me so I am able to confidently navigate my store.

4. It is a family business

My favourite part of owning a Burger Urge franchise is the opportunity to work alongside my family and be able to bring together a team that I consider friends. You learn very quickly in a work place that culture is important. Each person I hire has their own skill set which contributes to a one-of-a-kind experience for our customers.

5. We are part of the community

As every boss knows, employees are key. At the moment, I have a team of 24 with plans to grow but you only get out what you put in. I always try to make time to train and mentor the crew to give them the tools and support they need moving forward in their lives.

Since opening in April, Burger Urge at Stockland Glendale Shopping Centre continues to be extremely popular, with patronage exceeding my projections. Owing it to support at company level, and handpicking a capable and ambitious team, choosing the franchise model is the best calculated risk I have ever taken in business – and personal life.

For further information contact Burger Urge via 0468 989 005 or matt@burgerurge.com.au



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Are you drowning in the content of your business?

Scott Douglas
SiDCOR Chartered Accountants

A colleague of mine, after reading a few of my recent articles, commented that from these no one would know that I am an accountant. After my stereotypical response of, "why would you want anyone to know you're an accountant", I replied that first and foremost I am a leader in our business and the articles are meant to be contextual.

I believe all business leaders need to stay in context as much as they can. Context is what gives meaning to content. It is the "information necessary to correctly interpret a word or phrase that could otherwise be interpreted in a number of different ways". If I asked what the colour red meant to you, I would get a range of responses - hot, fast, Valentine's Day, latest episode of the Vampire Diaries (my daughter's watching it currently!). However, if I asked you what red meant in the context of traffic lights, you would all give me the response of 'stop' (well, I hope you would anyway!).

Therefore, whether you're an accountant, lawyer, architect, electrician or marine biologist (cue Seinfeld reference) how you want yourself and your team to show up won't be determined by what your business does, how it conducts its meetings, what software you use, or how you approach your cashflow management, but by the context you set that will give the meaning to all that content.

Whether you want the team to allow themselves to be vulnerable, authentic, trustworthy, diligent or efficient, will all be a direct result of how you clarify, communicate and lead the context of your business.

I see too many leaders turn into managers, deep diving into the detail and focusing on the doing before setting the context of how they want to show up and where they are trying to go. This context really starts with clarity of your purpose, vision and values. By leading in this context, team members will get the bigger picture, and you will more effectively be able to bring them along on your journey, and have them engaged in their own purpose as they can then align to yours.

Ask yourself, do you know the context of your business or are you drowning in the content? How often do you stay in that space as a leader? The answer to these two questions will give you an insight into your effectiveness as a leader, and have you focused on the areas with the biggest impact.

For further information contact SiDCOR on 1300 743 267, email scott@sidcor.com.au or visit www.sidcor.com.au



Scott Douglas, the CEO at SiDCOR Chartered Accountants, has over 20 years' experience in accounting and taxation, having begun his career with international accounting firm KPMG. With extensive experience in a variety of industries and with all types of businesses from local entrepreneurs to national organisations, Scott is perfectly suited to provide solutions needed to minimise tax and maximise wealth. Scott has a Bachelor of Commerce from Newcastle University and is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.



THE BUSINESS CENTRE

Stephen Barr has joined the Business Centre Board of Directors. Director of Barr Property and Planning Pty Ltd, Stephen has contributed to the development industry since 1992, and works with clients to combine strategic thinking with practical planning advice. His involvement in affordable housing has guided his vision to encourage businesses to make positive social contributions. Stephen's knowledge of Newcastle's local business community and his business ethics make him an important addition to the board.



FARRAR GESINI DUNN

Robert Routh has commenced as a Director in the Newcastle office of Farrar Gesini Dunn. Robert has over 25 years of experience working in family law. He is a former Registrar of the Family Court of Australia and is a registered Dispute Resolution Practitioner in family law. Robert is experienced in complex family law property matters and has specialist knowledge in relation to bankruptcy and superannuation matters.



FARRAR GESINI DUNN

Victoria Blakeley has commenced as a Senior Solicitor in the Farrar Gesini Dunn's newly opened Newcastle office. Victoria has worked with the firm as a family lawyer since her admission. Victoria is a trained collaborative law specialist who brings a focus on out of court settlements where possible. Victoria is experienced in complex parenting matters, as well as property and child support matters. Victoria aims to bring a fresh, cooperative approach to family law in the Hunter Region.



THE BUSINESS CENTRE

Frank Herb has been appointed to the Business Centre Board of Directors. Frank is a seasoned professional manager with over 30 years of experience in the IT arena. Frank's ability to support transition and change has underpinned many of the successes in his professional life. This year has seen Frank join a major financial institution to manage their IT strategic program, where his personal objective is to introduce new and more flexible approaches to delivering significant IT projects to the organisation.

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Residential real estate agent reveals 2018 suburb predictions for Hunter

Hunter Valley real estate agent James Rodrick of the award-winning real estate group Starr Partners, has announced his top suburbs to watch in the upcoming year.

1. Raymond Terrace. Attractive to first home buyers, Raymond Terrace offers affordability and value with a median house price of \$355,000 and 9.7% growth over the last 12 months. Close in proximity to the Nelson Bay area, only 35 minutes to Newcastle CBD and a short drive to Newcastle Airport, the suburb also benefits from being well-serviced by public transport as well as shopping centres, cafes and restaurants. In 2018, I think we'll see a lot more buyers investing in the suburb, with the average price and strong rental yields of around 5.4% very appealing.

2. Maitland. The suburb of Maitland is often overlooked by buyers as many see it as being ungentrified, but it's emerging as a trendy part of the region and had growth of 16% this year. We are seeing more cafes, restaurants and bars open, and the streets in and around the CBD are lined with character-filled terrace style homes that almost make it the Hunter region's answer to Sydney's Marrickville. Developers are seeing the potential in the area and there are a couple of apartment developments underway, as well as public and private sectors injecting significant investment with the revitalisation of The Levee and new Aldi store.

3. Bolwarra. Historically, Bolwarra has always been well regarded, but the larger block sizes are increasingly becoming more appealing from the younger generation of buyers who crave space. Changes to the catchment area of the popular Bolwarra Public School is really going to drive even further interest for this green and leafy suburb and see prices grow into the coming year and beyond.



4. Chisholm. The area has seen significant land releases over the last couple of years and I predict the area will continue to grow, particularly among families – the new school, medical facilities, childcare centres, recreational areas, shopping centres and proximity to Newcastle and Maitland enable an easy commute regardless of where people work.

5. Weston. Weston was on my list last year, but to me it's still slightly undervalued with a median house price of \$312,000. Being located close to the Hunter Expressway is a huge drawcard for the area as residents can easily travel to Newcastle, the Upper Hunter region, wineries and vineyards, and even Sydney. Weston is also going to be on the radar of those looking to invest in 2018 with rental yields of approximately 5.6%.



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It's amazing where serendipity takes you

Steve Dick
Raine & Horne Commercial

On the final Sunday of November while others watched the Supercars, I grabbed a coffee on the way to work. Frustratingly, as I got out of the car, I dropped the container. This left a third of the steaming liquid in my car, another third splattered over my car park, and the balance all over me.

Apart from the frustration, the mishap left me contemplating my coffee craving, and why Australians have become so enamoured of this ground bean cultivated in some far off tropical highland? Moreover, once a nation of tea lovers, Australian's are now right at the top of the tree for coffee snobbery per capita on the planet. Going to Asia, the USA or even Europe, we find ourselves on a voracious quest for a brew that matches the quality of our caffeine fix at home in Oz.

Is our caffeine obsession a measure of our self-importance or where we believe our economic standing to be in the world? An instant coffee is no longer good enough, which to my way of thinking is setting us up for some rude awakenings.

Diversification is the way forward

The Hunter is a microcosm of Australia. As in other parts of the country, we have a reliance on digging up minerals, ours is fossilised minerals for export to the likes of Japan, Taiwan and Korea. However, the tide is turning for our region, as more and more countries commit to a higher level of renewable energy as a power source. Yet successive state and federal governments want us to keep digging and shipping off the fool's gold. To compound the error, they want us to go on believing all is good with this situation.

In the process, Australia's and the Hunter's once great manufacturing base has been obliterated. We are moving into a service based economy – as former federal Liberal Party leader John Hewson put it “we are basically sitting around serving each other cups of coffee.” Laughably, we then complain on an App, if the coffee is not quite up to our tastes. Would you like a dose of reality with your cappuccino?

Housing is underpinning the economy

Around 67% of Australia's GDP growth in 2016 came from the housing market, a situation that doesn't appear to be slowing anytime soon. In an article written by Matt Barrie of freelancer.com, the writer cites crane statistics from the Rider Levett Bucknall Crane Index, which said there were 350 tower cranes in operation throughout Sydney in the fourth quarter of 2017.

In total, there were 586 cranes in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne, with 80% on building apartments for a population base of 11,088,000 people. This represents one crane for every 18,291 people. In comparison, New York has 28 cranes, San Francisco 24 and there are 40 cranes in Los Angeles. That's 92 cranes for a combined population 19,000,000 people, or one crane for every 206,522 people. In the Newcastle region there is currently seven cranes for a population of 434,000 or one every 62,000 people. More troubling, the Barry article said that the data shows one third of the Australian cranes are in postcodes with 'restricted lending', where the residents have poor credit ratings.

Luckily, the real estate bubble in Australia's eastern states hasn't yet followed the American script. In 2007, the subprime debacle was driven by a combination of poor lending practices and an oversupply of dwellings – sound familiar?

Economic Complexity Index

As a region and a nation, we need to diversify our economy's income stream. This diversity is measured internationally by the Economic Complexity Index (ECI). This indicator measures the related networks, the mix of networks, and the complexity of networks required to make a product. By combining all products produced by a country, an index is created – the ECI.

Fundamentally, the ECI is a measure of economic sophistication and diversification. Given our predilection to outsource manufacturing overseas, our government's affection for mining royalties, our communal love for expensive housing and piccolo lattes, Australia is near the bottom of the barrel when it comes to the economic diversity and sophistication. Indeed, we finished 71st out of 124, which is just ahead of Algeria, and behind the likes of Slovakia, Greece, Namibia - we have fallen 18 places in the last decade.

Look, I'm all for politicians debating issues such as same sex marriage, (I was a yes), where to put sporting stadiums, new train lines and our gold-plated welfare system. Yet no one seems to be courageous enough to address the big issue looming which is the fundamentals of our economy. We just prefer to sit back, and sip on our flat whites and let the world move on around us.

For further information contact Steve Dick on 0425 302 771, email steve@rhplus.com.au or visit www.rhplus.com.au



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Steven Dick has had a varied background with experiences in geotechnical engineering to hospitality and catering. He also represented at NBL Level Basketball. His expertise, experience and analytical skills have seen him involved with a number of companies at board level. He has also attained the highest level of recognition in the LJ Hooker and Raine & Horne Commercial Organisations.



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FOR SALE

**IMPRESSIVE FREEHOLD INVESTMENT**

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Property Details

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Expressions of Interest**REBEL SPORT STORE - MAITLAND NSW**

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- Proven National Retailer
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- Prime location & exposure
- Building Area - 1,250m² approx
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For further information please contact - **Andrew Cant**: 0414 648 881

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MAITLAND

**439 HIGH STREET MAITLAND (GFL)**

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PAUL TILDEN 0425 302 772

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BERESFIELD

**305 ELWELL CLOSE BERESFIELD (Unit 2)**

Great chance to own your own Torrens Title concrete panel warehouse. 6 metre height to eaves. Front shop entry, amenities, kitchenette & outdoor staff area.

Price: \$810,000 + GST **Lease:** \$63,000pa + OGs + GST

ALAN TONKS 0425 302 770

FOR SALE

BERESFIELD

**53 ELWELL CLOSE BERESFIELD (Units 1-9)**

Concrete tilt panel units from 137m² to 224m² (approx). Built by renowned Industrial builders WA Brown and due for completion mid 2018.

Price: From \$325,000 + GST

JASON MORRIS 0425 302 778

FOR LEASE

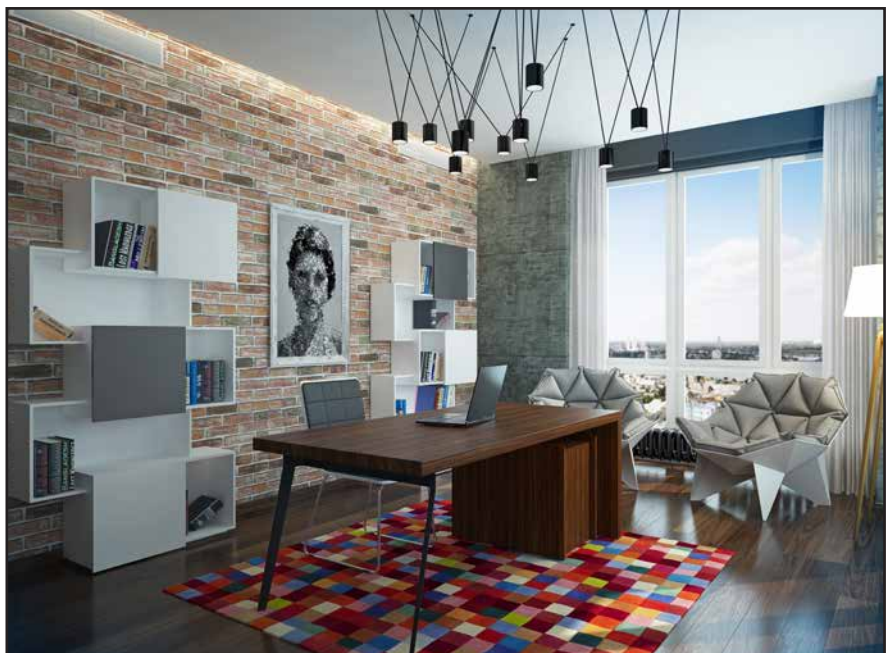
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MATT NELSON 0425 302 776



2017 WOMEN IN BUSINESS

This month's cover features three women who have had very different business journeys and stories to tell but are all excellent examples of women with impressive achievements in business: Sandra Hinchey, a Registered Architect and a Director at Webber Architects; Sophie Chaffey, founder and Managing Director of Alliance Labour Solutions; and Gillian Summers, Managing Director and owner of Brain Industries Pty Ltd.

The feature also includes stories from a number of other local businesswomen as well as supporting articles around the Women in Business theme.

We hope you enjoy reading this feature and also consider the wider issues of Women in Business, both at the broader level and within your organisation.



Sandra HINCHEY

Sandra Hinchey is a Registered Architect and a Director at Webber Architects. She is involved in all facets of the business including operations, finance, marketing, and human resources. Sandra currently has three graduates and one architectural student on her project team.

Sandra commenced her career path by studying architecture in Newcastle and first worked at a small firm in Sydney. She met her now husband during her university days and as he is in the RAAF they moved to different parts of Australia including Brisbane, Townsville and Perth. Fortunately Sandra found work in all locations and progressed her career from working on small toilet blocks to being Project Architect on a \$25 million University building. When Sandra was notified of her husband's impending transfer to Williamstown, she got back in touch with Jon Webber, who she went to university with, and suggested they work together.

Several people have actively encouraged and helped Sandra along her architectural journey - her high school physics teacher, the architect she first worked for, university peers, and the architect who guided her through the registration process.

2018 will mark Webber Architects' 15th year practising in Newcastle and has now grown to 19 team members and also having a Sydney-based office. The business undertakes architecture, urban design, master planning, and interior design.

Their portfolio includes high, medium and low density multi-residential dwellings as well as both affordable and custom architectural single homes. The portfolio also includes universities, schools and child care facilities; libraries; sporting, recreational and community facilities; medical facilities; clubs and other hospitality venues; and office fit outs.

Her typical work day commences with a brief 'huddle' where her team runs through the plans for the day, share news and messages and deal with queries. Webber Architects manages several projects ranging in size and scope and at different stages so each day is different, however Sandra always has emails and calls to tend to and typically a site visit and several client meetings to attend. She regularly checks in with her team to offer guidance and delegate tasks as required. Over lunch Sandra may attend a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) presentation.

Sandra says she loves liaising with clients, stakeholders, engineers, planners, project managers and local authorities etc involved in a project. She enjoys the intricacies of establishing what and who is needed in order to obtain the best outcome.

When Sandra commenced her architectural career she entered a very competitive job market with limited real-world experience - challenges not exclusive to this industry. Being female in a largely male-dominated industry has occasionally meant working that little bit harder to illustrate her skills.

Currently, women in architectural practice and senior roles are vastly under-represented which Sandra would like to see change. At Webber Architects over half of the team members are women. Their experience reflects research findings that diversity in the workplace brings different ideas, views and insights, enhancing the ability to find and offer the best creative solutions.

For other women looking towards a similar career path, Sandra advises students and new graduates to realise what you don't know and to ask questions. Council controls, construction standards and guidelines in architecture are constantly being updated, so being aware of these and knowing where to look for information is important.

Away from work, Sandra and her husband spend time with their two kids who are involved in activities including netball, tennis, music, golf and touch football. Sandra is on their school's P&C and tries to fit in time for exercise and catching up with friends.

Sandra is also always looking to expand her outlook. She attended the Learning Environments Australasia conference in Singapore which was an invaluable opportunity to meet with and learn from others involved in education planning. Later, on a family holiday to Fiji, she toured a primary school and learnt about their learning methods and how they make the most of the resources available to them.

Most people don't know Sandra is a little afraid of heights but has challenged herself with Tree Tops Adventure Park and Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb.

She is very positive about the Hunter Region and says it offers a great lifestyle and great business opportunities. Sandra would like to see the development of Newcastle's light rail reinvigorate Hunter Street and further develop business in that area.



Sophie CHAFFEY

Sophie Chaffey is Managing Director of Alliance Labour Solutions, a company she founded to provide a robust recruitment/training and labour solution. The business was established

early 2013 and has experienced outstanding growth since that time. It commenced with just Sophie, a phone, a laptop and a passion for enriching the customer experience and lifting the benchmark of service within the recruitment sector. Today the business has grown into an organisation that is Australia wide with a footprint stretching from WA to Qld to SA and where it all began in NSW. It is predominately represented in the construction, civil, materials handling and mining industries. With a workforce of 300+ across Australia, Alliance Labour Solutions is gearing up to see further substantial growth in 2018-19.

Sophie says "A typical day when I first started the business began at 3 am to get candidates mine site ready for a 6 am start. It consisted of client interactions, phone calls, and safety interactions on site with my people, payroll, accounting, policies and procedure creation. I would literally fall into bed at approximately 10 pm after finishing off resolving any client issues."

The business now has a full complement within its management structure and Sophie can focus on commercial aspects of the business, long term strategic planning, positioning in the market place and charitable work within the community.

What Sophie likes most about my role is the ability to effect change in people's lives, to see how employment and growth in an individual's capabilities and skill level can have a positive impact on their life and that of their families. She loves creating and building and Alliance is in a new and exciting phase where she will be seeing some planned growth come to fruition. Sophie says she has an outstanding business partner and team who she loves working with.

"The way in which our team can problem solve and work around the clock to achieve outcomes for our clients and ultimately success for Alliance is second to none. They are fierce," says Sophie.

Sophie's passion for business began at an early age and developed even stronger in high school, which eventually led to her deciding on a business degree at the University of Newcastle. Her parents had involved Sophie and her siblings in their small business growing up and this led to the development of her work ethic and passion to create. Sophie says that she really came into herself when she began coaching with Chris Freeman from BWC Newcastle - that is when she decided to back herself and put it all on the line to start Alliance.

Sophie says that she admires quite a few people that she has come into contact with throughout her career; strong and intelligent, both male and female that have enriched the way she conducts herself in business today. She likes to keep these people close and soak up all the knowledge they are willing to share. Sophie says that she comes from a long line of never give up females in her family; her mother, aunts and grandmother inspire her everyday with their resolve in hard times, never ending commitment and ability to give to others.

Sophie said that like any person, starting out in business was confronting. Being young and a woman her experience was challenging at times, having to conduct herself in an industrial environment which had quite a small representation of females. Sophie has always been of the opinion to never give up and always surround herself with people that are experts in their field. She considered herself lucky to have received support and encouragement from people within the industry, both male and female, and has never felt at a disadvantage.

For women setting out on a similar career path, Sophie advises that they take a hold of the amazing opportunities that are on offer, work hard, be authentic and true to yourself and surround yourself with leaders and professionals that have been there and done that. Sophie says she is an intuitive leader and embraces what her femininity brings to Alliance and the industry.

Sophie adds "always keep in mind that we all have strengths and weaknesses and it is the way in which we leverage our strengths that matters. Make no excuses."

Sophie believes the Hunter region has a lot to offer entrepreneurs. She says we are definitely packing a punch across a range of industries and have been given multiple opportunities and avenues to showcase our potential.

Away from work Sophie says she has an obsession with Great Danes and that she absolutely adores animals big and small. In her spare time she finds herself googling Great Danes and dreaming of owning a rescue dog farm somewhere outside of Newcastle.

Gillian SUMMERS

Gillian Summers is Managing Director and Owner of Brain Industries Pty Ltd. With her partner,

Tony Lobb, Gillian set up a manufacturing company as they believe in making things using local skills. The company Magpie Mining started in 2013 with two people, morphing to Brain Industries, still at Carrington, with 20 people and business turnover doubling year on year. Brain Industries makes safety equipment for mining, tunnelling, shipping, and oil & gas.

Gillian says her days are varied but her next day was scheduled to commence with a toolbox meeting with tradies re safety and improvement, then cooking bacon and eggs for a weekly BBQ, talking to Mai Wel re employing people with disabilities and then wallowing in financials ... thrilling stuff like margins, cash position, funding growth. This will then be followed with marketing to companies around the corner, in WA and Africa, and then planning with Lifeline, where she is an ambassador.

Gillian loves that her business is inventing and making things to make lives safer and better and that they employ Novocastrians to use and improve their skills.

Gillian says she has had a "hair-raisingly eclectic background, true to need for wild discovery." This has included being Marketing Manager at Qantas, CEO of Hunter Economic Development Corporation, Marketing Manager at Forgacs, Chief of Staff for the Lord Mayor of Newcastle and CEO at Lifeline.

Her "oompah", no matter what industry, comes from human beings and writing; in other words, telling people like she sees it, and digging up things to inspire. No surprise that her degrees include marketing and communications.

Tony Lobb is a man who inspires Gillian. He currently runs Strata Australia and South Africa, so spends half his life away from his partner. Tony makes, exports, and thinks big. Gillian says "he also instigates, charms, and even gets you to enjoy a knuckle wrap. He works as hard as any woman I know."

When Gillian commenced her working life she worked in Sydney and Newcastle, which she says were then blokes' towns.

"Our sex was often seen as the drone; dare I say, the doormat," says Gillian. "It was painful to have striking opinions when even women in management had to speak their turn only. I learnt to speak resolutely albeit briefly and listen exquisitely. Glad I was patient! Ensuing decades saw hiccups and leaps of change for women."

Manufacturing is still a boys' game but Gillian relishes being there. She loves the trail blazers ... the female engineers and tradies in fluoro who cut through stereotyping. Today, one of these is engineer Kari Armitage who runs Quarry Mining.

Gillian says "the work place should be like The Voice Blind Auditions ... blind to shallow differences. Every human being needs their voice heard."

For women commencing on a similar career Gillian recommends that they listen to their heart, needs, and reasoning. Also be there with empathy and reciprocity.

Although Gillian's early career was up and down corporate ladders elsewhere, she is now a self-confessed Newie tragic. She says Hunter business is resourceful and resolute and that in the future we need more of the same, with locally-owned companies leading the way.

Away from her current business image, Gillian has had a few experiences that may, or may not, surprise some of her colleagues. These include learning to fly small planes whilst living in Hawaii and seeing Kilauea Volcano fountaining lava from a helicopter with doors off.

The illusive quest for "Work-life balance"

Lyndell Fogarty
performHR

About 2 years ago, I came up with the radical idea that taking a day or 2 off a month would be a great thing – a great thing for not only myself, but also my organisation and my team. This doesn't sound particularly mind blowing, the concept of scheduling time out from a super busy life, but the reality for me has been that it has taken me 2 years to actually do it.

Three months ago, it was my business partner Kirbie who politely reminded me about my intent to schedule a day off by asking me 'how are you going with that?'. The fact is, I was 'not going with that' at all. It was the thing that I kept having an excuse for, the thing that I had some guilt around, and the thing that I wondered how everything could work if I decided to do this. The amount of limiting self talk I had going on that was holding me back from putting my wish into action was incredible. And yet, here I am, espousing that we all need to put back into ourselves, regularly, so that we can enjoy life, be equipped to respond to the curveballs that invariably are tossed at us and ultimately be the best version of ourselves.

Building a business from a napkin concept, whilst juggling 3 children under 8 (in 2009), to now leading an amazing leadership team and an ever expanding organisation continues to take incredible resilience, energy and focus. The biggest risk to myself is regularly flicking my 'off switch' because I enjoy what I do, to the point where I really am living my passion.

The problem that I came to realise with this was that I cannot sustain giving my all to my team, to our clients, and to my family, without switching off from time to time. When I don't allow myself a 'circuit breaker' moment in my life it all ends in tears and tantrums and it is my darling husband that bears the brunt of this event. So I did it. I began taking a day off.

Day one of this new intent in action saw me indulge many of my other passions – a Yin Yoga class, writing and catching up with my family over dinner. I had so many reasons today to not follow through on my commitment to take the day off – but I followed through anyway with the



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belief that the more I invest in me, the more not only I will benefit but my business, my amazing team and my wonderful family will too.

I am a strong believer in the fact that work life balance is in fact a myth. Work is a part of life, and when you are passionate about what it is that you do, 'work' is not something you simply switch off at the end of the day. The constant quest for creating an ideal work life balance to me, is all about finding the right combo of what matters and what you need to do – a 'balance' that works for you. This is much easier said than done at times, however, it should be a key focus for everyone, and in particular business leaders. To operate optimally we need to have energy and clarity of focus and to get these things, we need to know what our 'sources' are – for me it is time with my family, time with my team, time working on clients to create change and time for myself. Although a work in progress, I believe that this is the example we should all be setting in our organisations. As the saying goes, "you cannot pour from an empty cup".

And at the end of the day, the world does still continue to spin, even if you allow yourself to slow down for a moment.

For further information contact performHR on 1300 406 005, email info@performhr.com.au or visit www.performhr.com.au



Lyndell Fogarty is CEO and one of the founders of performHR, Australia's leading provider of outsourced HR for mid-tier organisations. Her team, located across the eastern seaboard of Australia, work with businesses to provide them with access to professional HR support delivered when and where they need it.

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For former NBN news journalist, presenter and local business identity, Melinda Smith, postgraduate studies provided valuable opportunities after 25 years in the media.

"I knew gaining a qualification would serve me well as I planned my career change," said Melinda.

"Undertaking my Master of Business at UON delivered the perfect pathway to explore a new field of interest and expertise, and ultimately led me to establish my own strategic communication business."

With a commitment to equity and excellence, the University has a strong focus on providing opportunities for people from all backgrounds including the new Women in Master of Business Administration (WiMBA) scholarship.

There is also a strong focus on linking teaching to local enterprise and using opportunities for leading professionals to teach and mentor students. Melinda is a senior consultant to Purser Corporate Communication, and also continues to be associated with the University as a guest lecturer and contributor to the MBA Advisory Board.

"I received outstanding support and worked hard to achieve the most from my experience at UON which broadened my knowledge and increased my network. It means a lot to be able to give back to others," said Melinda.



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Jackie DUJMOVIC

Jackie is the founder and director of Hover UAV a company who uses drones, to deliver high quality aerial imagery, research, video and data. She also utilises her experience and acts as an instructor for "She Flies". This program teaches young woman how to code and fly drones. Its aim is to excite and inspire young woman to become more involved in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) based subjects and careers.

Hover UAV started out of a needed career change from almost 12 years working at sea within the global marine industry. With a keen interest in technology and seeing firsthand the applications drones could be used for the desire to start her own business in this emerging industry was nurtured.

The thing Jackie loves most about running a small business is the diversity it provides. Not one project undertaken is ever the same leading to many challenging and exciting opportunities. It constantly requires thinking outside the box and provides a profound sense of achievement when new applications and methods of using drones produce amazing results.

Jackie and her team have been involved in using drone technology to conduct state wide shark surveillance, whale research, construction progress monitoring and environmental mapping and monitoring.

Jackie felt when she first started out with Hover UAV there was a drive to do everything. She soon realized that she needed a focus to become more productive. Once this change was made things really went from strength to strength for her.

She believes one crucial aspect of a small business that was over looked when she first start out was the importance of networking. Jackie's emphasis was to do everything herself but quickly realized nobody is an expert at everything. It became imperative to find a trustworthy network of individuals to help with guidance as she moved forward. Collaboration and openness is now a massive part of Hover UAV's development and growth.

The one piece of advice Jackie would give to women starting their own business or considering a career change would be to just go for it. If you are interested in it, you are going to be good at it.



Rachel LODDING

Rachel is Business Banking Executive for Newcastle nab Business.

No two days are the same for Rachel. Her day normally starts at 5.30 am when her husband leaves for work. This is "me time" for Rachel – the calm before the chaos begins. This typically includes a walk around Sanctuary (the estate she calls home), some tunes (normally alternative in genre), catching up on the morning news and the first caffeine hit of the day. Then it's the 8 am school drop off and into the office.

Rachel's primary focus is coaching and guiding her team in obtaining positive outcomes to assist business customers to continue to grow and create wealth for themselves. She does this with a lot of one on one coaching, credit rounds, facilitating capability sessions and liaising with many internal specialists and stakeholders. It also involves internal meetings to drive ongoing process/policy change, business development activities, embedding change, building relationships with customers and coordinating the local volunteering partnership with Oz Harvest.

Rachel started with nab 22 years ago as a trainee in Forbes NSW, with the first 10 years within the Retail segment throughout Central NSW. During this time Rachel moved five times availing of opportunities to progress her career as they arose. Her first leadership role was as Branch Manager Condobolin at the age of 23. In 2005 Rachel made the change to nab Business working her way from Business Banker through to her first executive role in 2013. These changes included a further three moves for the family.

Whilst she remains passionate about customers and community, it became quite evident early in Rachel's career that she was really motivated by developing others to be successful and confident.

She says that life experience and applying her core values of doing the right thing, being respectful and fair, have all contributed to make her the leader she is today. Her mother has been an inspiration – she taught Rachel that no matter what you choose to do you can be great at it - back yourself, work hard and never lose the passion.

Rachel says two mentors, Jon Meys and Steven Good, have had profound impacts on her leadership journey – at times believing in her when she didn't, pushing her to do things she never thought were achievable and supporting her all the way. Her husband Wayne has also been a massive support.

Rachel says she has been fortunate to work in an organisation that supports women in business. Her first important lesson was that respect needs to be earned - it doesn't come with a title. She found if you can deliver on your commitments it doesn't matter what gender you are. Rachel's biggest challenge has been herself. – learning to back herself even though she may not tick all the boxes for a role.

Rachel believes the banking industry needs to become more agile to deal with the changing needs of customers, whilst balancing a highly regulatory and competitive environment. Expanding the digital platform and capability is key. Customers will always want to speak to people. The customer value proposition must not lose sight of the people component in building relationships and trust.

Rachel advises other women commencing a similar career path to surround yourself with positive people that are not going to just tell you what you want to hear but rather what you need to hear. Never not avail of an opportunity just because you are afraid – back yourself. Be passionate about what you do and never give up.



Nikki ABERCROMBIE

Nikki Abercrombie is the Managing Director of a Newcastle-based event management company, Abercrombie Management, which specialises in running business events across Australia and New Zealand. Established in 2014, their business philosophy is to create memorable events that connect people, inspire ideas and improve lives.

Initially, Nikki ran the business as a soloist, alongside her part-time work, before taking the leap to full-time business owner. She now has a pool of contracted talent working across Australia on events. Nikki particularly enjoys the business development side of being a business owner, so was excited to see Abercrombie Management enter a growth stage this year. She can now delegate tasks to her team and focus on building the business even further.

No two days are the same in Nikki's virtual office. As a consultancy service, the business operates as an extension of clients' workforces. Nikki says her best days are when she doesn't start work until after her son goes to school—this took her a few years to work out! Nikki starts her work day by going over her plan for the day and week; managing time and energy is the key to working on multiple projects across multiple time zones.

As the business works on events across Australia and New Zealand, and have internationally based clients, Nikki usually spends about a third of the year travelling—something she loves as it lets her get out there and experience different places, and have conversations with a variety of people.

Nikki has been inspired throughout her career: business owners from a variety of industries, motivational speakers and clients who, in their day-to-day lives, are making an impact on the community in sectors like health, education and human services.

This year, Nikki participated in The Business Centre's Women in Business Mentoring Program which she says accelerated her through the early stages of the growth phase of her business and connected her with like-minded business owners who were both mentees and mentors.

One of Nikki's biggest challenges starting out in business was making sure she stayed on the path she wanted to be on, and understanding that it's a long-term, not short-term, plan. Lots of well-wishers had big ideas for her business and Nikki enthusiastically embraced every one of those ideas. But she had to work out quickly why she went into business and not be fearful about being on her own path and not be tempted to follow too closely in other people's footsteps.

When Nikki started her business, and especially in the first few start-up years, she was desperate to keep her business life and personal life separate. Then she realised that she is one person wearing multiple hats all at once, day-in, day-out. Nikki says that's when her mindset of being a business owner truly kicked in.

Emma HALE

Say private investigator and most people immediately think of a burly bloke, who is a former police or security officer that does surveillance work. One Hunter woman is turning this stereotyping on its head.

Through her career path of investigations and intelligence work with the police, government regulators, churches, schools and social services, Emma Hale saw the need for a local service beyond surveillance.

In April this year, she started Fair Square Investigations, a mobile workplace investigations company. As an external service, it offers impartial, independent and non-judgmental investigations and intelligence as well as post-investigation advice to organisations facing allegations, in particular abuse incidents relating to a child or a person with a disability.

As a female investigator, Emma believes she is perceived as being soft, gentle and caring with her approach, which provides benefits and challenges in the way others treat her. With most of her work being conversations, information gathering and rapport building about sensitive issues, she is aware being a woman has its distinct advantages in this male-dominated industry.

Most days are bookended with an interview, which can take place anywhere—the workplace, home, café, pub or any public venue—wherever the person is comfortable. Before and after each one, she works on that case with desk-based work research via the phone, databases and internet as well as report writing.

Compartmentalising her time was a skill developed during her career, especially working on major strike forces relating to child sexual abuse, the Catholic Church Professional Standards Investigation area, mental health and drug education school programs and studying criminology. From different workplaces and mentors, Emma has crafted a process and best practice for balance and fairness.

The biggest influence came from the former CEO of NSW Council for Intellectual Disability, Aine Healy, who challenged Emma to look at people and situations differently—to walk in their shoes then to reflect on the solution. It eventually led to her being a volunteer with the Intellectual Disability Rights Service to help clients through police interaction and court process.

Through this role and her business, Emma finds fascinating the diversity of her work, especially the range of people's "normal" when it comes to dealing with human behaviour.

In the future, she would like to see her industry adopt a continuing professional development program and accreditation for additional skills and expertise. This would help the industry evolve from the domination of individual surveillance work regarding insurance industry claims and spouse infidelities to companies doing quality legal and administrative investigations in relation to workplaces, child protection, disability matters as well as assisting law firms, their plaintives and clients.

As for females stepping into the space, Emma believes there are definitely opportunities across the industry. When researching to set up her business, she found there were about 55 locally listed private investigators and they were all men.



First Newcastle women awarded Honary Fellow by Engineers Australia

Honorary Fellow is Engineers Australia's highest membership grade and is conferred on a Fellow of Engineers Australia or a distinguished person whom the Board desires to honour for having rendered conspicuous service to the Australian people or in recognition of outstanding achievement.

Dr Gunilla Burrowes is the first female engineer in the Newcastle Division to receive this prestigious award. She has had strong connections to the Division over many years, having chaired the WiE group, served as a Division President and sat on Congress and Council. Gunilla currently sits on the local CLM Committee.

An electrical engineer with a broad range of industry and academic experience, Gunilla is passionate about innovation and diversity. Her engineering career has taken her on parallel journeys of entrepreneurship and advocacy as a role model and supporter for other female engineers in their career, both in universities and in business.

Gunilla is an advocate for increasing the profile of engineering and science in our community and she currently is active in this as Chair of Australian Science Innovations (www.asi.com.au), a not for profit with a mission to inspire and challenge our best secondary students in science and through a consultancy, Gender Matters Pty Ltd she has established to advise organisations on gender equity. She had managed a Women in Engineering program at the University of Newcastle and was an instigator of Engineers Australia's very successful themed year 2007: The Year of Women in Engineering. Her research (M.Phil.) and prominent role in diversity in engineering and gender-inclusive engineering education has given her an international reputation.

Gunilla has recently graduated from the AICD Directors Course as she has been an active member on numerous company boards and is keen to continue to grow as a company director. She has been a National Vice President of Engineers Australia, a founding Chair of Rights House Incorporated, an Angel Investing organisation based in the Hunter Region of NSW, and Deputy Chair of Engineers Media Pty Ltd. Currently she is Chair of Australian Science Innovations (ASI) and founding Chair of Eighteen04 Inc. an inspirational co-working space in Clean Tech and Smart City start-ups.

She completed a PhD part-time in Underwater Communication Networks in collaboration with Blue Zone Group, a company she founded with her husband in 2000.



REINSW award for Leah Jay Systems Support Manager

At the 2017 NSW Real Estate Institute Awards, the focus was, as you might expect, predominantly on the client-facing aspects of the industry: real estate agents and property managers. But Lesley Rattenbury, Systems Support Manager at Leah Jay, plays a vital role behind the scenes – and was also recognised with an REINSW award of her own.

Lesley joined Leah Jay in mid-2016. As property management specialists in an industry pervaded by disruption, Leah Jay had seen the need to be prepared and stay ahead through continuous improvement and implementation of new systems. This is where Lesley came in. Approaching the agency with a wealth of experience in banking and real estate, Lesley took on a newly created role, the focus of which earned her this year's Award for Excellence in Corporate Support from REINSW.

As Systems Support Manager, Lesley manages Leah Jay's systems, processes, policies and procedures. She works closely with the company's Operations Manager, Cassandra Lantry, to oversee operations-based projects, conduct quality assurance, ensure systems are compliant, and enable property managers to provide the best possible service. Bringing experience from her previous role as director of a small agency, Lesley found herself fitting easily into the Leah Jay team, led by one of the Hunter region's most successful female entrepreneurs.

Quality assurance and continuous improvement are key aspects of any business. But in an industry like property management that's prone to disruption, they are essential – and the importance of Lesley's work is exemplified by her acknowledgement at the industry's most prestigious awards.



Australia's latest gender equality scorecard released

More employers are taking action to address pay gaps and gender imbalances that persist across the economy, according to 2016-17 workplace data released by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

The fourth year of WGEA data records strong improvements in organisations conducting gender pay gap analyses, making managers accountable for gender equality outcomes, promoting women into manager roles and encouraging flexible work arrangements.

The data also confirms that every industry and occupation across the Australian workforce has a full-time gender pay gap favouring men, with women earning on average just 78% of men's full-time earnings. The average annual pay packet of full-time female employees is \$26,527 less than men's, rising to \$89,216 at the top level of management.

Pay gaps favouring men were also identified in every occupational category, from 8.4% for Clerical and Administrative workers (worth \$6,472) to 26.7% for Technicians and Trades workers (worth \$28,042).

Management roles continue to be heavily dominated by men with women remaining under-represented in the upper leadership echelons, holding just 16.5% of CEO roles and

29.7% of key management personnel roles.

Some of the key findings included in the scorecard are (with percentage point movement since 2015-16):

- **Gender pay gap (full-time total remuneration):** 22.4% (down 0.7 pp)
- **Employers who have conducted a gender pay gap analysis:** 37.7% (up 10.8pp)
- **Employers with manager KPIs related to gender equality:** 28.4% (up 5pp)
- **Appointments of women to manager roles (including promotions):** 43.4% (up 0.8pp)
- **Employers with flexible work policies:** 68.3% (up 5.3pp)
- **Proportion of women directors on boards and governing bodies:** 24.9% (up 0.2pp)

Guiding organisations in realising the potential in the workplace

Emma Rutter, a Property Advisor with APP Corporation is working with businesses to help them articulate and achieve their vision when it comes to optimising work spaces, by balancing the leadership vision, property requirements, and users' needs within their working environment.

From a background in HR and recruitment, Emma moved into projects working with a top tier Financial Services firm and later transitioned to property with a large general Insurance firm, advancing her career into strategic planning roles in an organisation undergoing significant change, to develop their national property footprint consisting of 180 sites and approximately 180,000 sqm of space. More recently Emma successfully managed the University of Newcastle's (UON) transition into the NeW Space city precinct development and is currently working with the UON to undertake a Post Occupancy Evaluation.

Emma has honed a skillset for developing property portfolio and workplace strategies whilst retaining a people-driven focus, applying her expertise beyond the corporate commercial sectors into education, not for profit and various other sectors.

In response to industry and technology changes, workplaces are evolving to play more active, enabling roles for organisations to help them meet strategic challenges. Change is the status quo for many sectors and highlights the need to be nimble and flexible in the face of disruption – in particular as a result of rapid changes in technology and the consequent changes to the way people work and use buildings.

Emma understands that real estate, when leveraged effectively, is critical to advancing the purpose and objectives of an organisation. Her expertise comes in defining the relationship between a business, its space and the people that use it, creating environments that deliver not only operationally, but individually too. With a focus on creating adaptable organisations and workplaces that foster increased connection, engagement, and embrace diversity.



Delighted with her recent move to Newcastle, she's found opportunity to grow, diversify and develop her career doing the work that she loves in a city undergoing exciting transformation.

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Rix Creek Mining Tour for Singleton High Students

Rix's Creek Mine became a giant, open-air classroom when 25 Singleton High School Year 9 students toured The Bloomfield Group Rix's Creek Coal Mine site on October 25.

The tour was part of the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue's School Mine Tours Program which is scheduled to see about 1200 local Year 9 and Year 5 students visit mine sites across the Upper Hunter over the next year.

The School Mine Tours Program aims to educate Upper Hunter students on all aspects of coal mining including its impacts on the community and the benefits it provides in our day-to-day lives. The program gives students and teachers the unique opportunity of seeing mining operations up close while presenting factual and unbiased information.

Dialogue Chairman Dave O'Brien said the tours were designed to teach youth the facts about mining including its impacts and benefits.

"The Dialogue's School Mine Tours Program aims to demystify the mining process while teaching the facts instead of opinion or emotion," Mr O'Brien said.

With all the Dialogue's mining industry partners supporting the program, tours will be conducted at most open cut mine sites across the Upper Hunter.

In conjunction with the tours program, a working group including teachers is developing in-class materials which will align with the Year 9 syllabus.

As well, the Dialogue is also developing a virtual reality video which students can use to learn about mining and how it and its products are part of their day to day lives.



Quarry Mining recruits disability worker

Corey McDonald,
Dale Charlesworth and Kari Armitage

Glencore and Quarry Mining in partnership have created a valuable opportunity to provide a disability worker with employment, new skills and

experience, working within a workshop team environment which boasts an exceptional culture for safety and camaraderie.

Quarry Mining was exploring opportunities around employment of a casual employee to assist with ongoing recycling of drill bits through a disability provider. Mai-Wel Group, the disability provider, put forward a person who had the necessary skills and work ethic to undertake the specific task of drill bit de-brazing.

Refurbishing drill bits to achieve multiple use is no longer economically viable, due to manufacturing of new drill bits being undertaken off shore, so this challenge was offset by an opportunity to create a different mindset.

New team member, 26-year-old Dale Charlesworth has been recruited to join the Quarry team. Dale's job involves the collection of drill bits from Glencore sites to Quarry Mining's premises at Beresfield for processing where he will then collate, clean, de-braze, sort, and ship carbide for recycling.

Kari Armitage MD of Quarry Mining commented. "It is inevitable that some manufacturing will be taken offshore, so we need to be creative and ensure clever jobs remain here. I think this opportunity does that, on a whole new level – it brings a job opportunity that is rewarding and ultimately offers openings for varied work to someone who may find it a challenge to obtain employment. This work offers the threefold advantages of the niche employment, affords employment where there would ordinarily have been jobs lost, and enables an environmentally responsible work practice to be undertaken in a cost-effective manner."

Quarry will bear all costs associated with the employment in what they believe will be a very solid investment in culture, community and the business itself.

Kari endorsed Glencore contribution and support of the endeavor. "Partnering with our clients for better solutions is always our priority but this is a truly rewarding initiative and hopefully the beginning of more things like it."

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- For large volumes of commercial, industrial and building wastes
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- Suits businesses with enough space to store the bin onsite

IEA confirms reliance on minerals sector for energy needs

In its 2017 World Energy Outlook's New Policies Scenario – incorporating policies and measures already put in place by governments around the world, as well as their likely effects – the International Energy Agency has projected the sources of global electricity production in 2040.

According to the Minerals Council of Australia, the IEA's report confirms the importance of fossil fuels and nuclear in meeting 60% of all electricity demand in 2040.

Coal will remain the primary source of electricity in China and India in 2040, with South-East Asia tripling coal fired electricity. Coal powered generation is projected to increase from 9,282 TWh in 2016 to 10,086 TWh in 2040, representing 26% of all electricity produced. Nuclear energy is expected to increase by 47% from 2,611 TWh in 2016 to 3,844 TWh in 2040, representing 10% of all electricity produced. Solar photovoltaic and wind electricity generation is expected to rise from 1,284 TWh in 2016 to 8,432 TWh in 2040, or 19% of all electricity produced.

The projected increase in wind and solar power represents significant demand for Australian iron ore, metallurgical coal, copper, lithium, cobalt, indium and gallium – the building blocks of renewable energy equipment.

In summary, the IEA report highlights increasing demand for Australia's mineral resources, including thermal and metallurgical coal, uranium and the myriad of other resources the Australia's world class mining sector provides.

Biofuel facility for Muswellbrook

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has announced \$11.9 million in funding for Australian biofuel company Ethtec to complete the development and demonstration of its groundbreaking advanced biofuel technology.

As part of a \$48 million project, Ethtec aims to construct a \$30 million purpose built pilot-scale facility based in Muswellbrook.

On behalf of the Australian Government, ARENA's funding will go towards the completion of the pilot demonstration plant which will produce ethanol from a range of non-food waste plant matter left over from crop harvesting and forestry.

Ethtec has developed an innovative and cost-effective approach to production of bioethanol from a range of waste or low-value products including sugarcane bagasse, forestry residues and cotton gin trash known as lignocellulosic biomass.

Demand for ethanol in Australia is expected to increase by approximately 500 million litres each year over the period to 2030, with mandates in Queensland and New South Wales. All of Australia's ethanol is currently first generation, sourced from wheat and sugarcane, while second generation ethanol is derived from inedible plant waste.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said the next phases of the project were important in making advanced biofuels a viable option to support emission reduction for the transport sector.

"Advanced biofuels provides an exciting opportunity for Australia to open up export avenues and also help reduce emissions from the transport sector.

"Ethtec's facility in the Hunter Valley will demonstrate a new and innovative process for the production of bioethanol, gaining pivotal research and development experience that will lead to the commercialisation of the process and position Australia as a leader in advanced biofuels," Mr Frischknecht said.

"The global demand for biofuels is expected to triple by 2050, with most of the growth to be met by ethanol so technological breakthroughs that make producing ethanol from waste more

efficient is game changing," he said.

The world-leading facility will partner with researchers from the Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources at the University of Newcastle and is also receiving support from Muswellbrook Shire Council.

NSW coal mining jobs growing again

The strong turnaround in coal prices and increased demand for NSW coal from our key export markets is delivering more coal mining jobs for NSW. The most recent figures from Coal Services show there were just over 20,600 coal production jobs in NSW as at July this year - over 1,300 more than at the same time last year, and the highest number since March 2015.

Many of these new coal mining jobs are in the Hunter, with over 1,000 more local Hunter coal mining jobs than a year earlier, helping to boost the Hunter economy, particularly in mining communities like Singleton and Muswellbrook.

The growth in NSW coal mining jobs is also good news for the more than 8,000 businesses in the suburbs of Sydney and across the State that supply mining operations in NSW.

"There's been a sustained recovery in business conditions for coal mining in NSW over the last 18 months, with increased commodity prices delivering jobs in our coal mining regions.

"Our NSW coal mining communities have done it tough over the past few years, so this jobs boost mining is really good news for local economies," NSW Minerals Council CEO, Stephen Galilee said today.

"Increasing demand for NSW coal means more NSW coal mining jobs. With the right policy settings that make the most of growing opportunities, our coal mining industry can continue to deliver employment, investment and economic stability well into the future," he said.



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Peabody Energy's Wambo Mine have taken out the highly contested 55th Australian Underground Mines Rescue competition in sensational form yesterday in Narrabri.

Wambo were closely followed by Queensland's Moranbah North and Broadmeadow teams who claimed second and third place respectively.

The Australian Mines Rescue Competition is run by a committee of joint representatives from NSW Mines Rescue and Queensland Mines Rescue. It is hosted on a rotational basis each year and held in different mining regions.

Four New South Wales (NSW) teams who won their respective regional competitions, and four Queensland mining teams (also decided by a series of competitions), vied for the 2017 title. Tahmoor (Wollongong), Newcastle, Springvale (Lithgow), Hunter Valley (Wambo) represented NSW while teams from Kestrel, Moranbah North, Broadmeadow and Grosvenor mines represented Queensland.

These elite brigadesmen were put through their paces, responding to a number of scenarios in different environments. Surface and underground exercises included firefighting, first aid and a series of search and rescue, emergency response and risk management challenges.

For the first time in the competition's history the event was held in the north-western NSW coalfields, onsite at the Whitehaven Coal Narrabri mine.

'Whitehaven Coal welcomed the opportunity to host the 2017 competition and extend a warm welcome to our Narrabri operation, one of six operating mines within the Whitehaven Coal group,' said Steve Bow, General Manager Narrabri.

When Peabody Energy's team captain Warren Kirk was asked about the win he said, 'I want to thank Peabody for supporting the team. I want to thank the team for giving up hours of their personal time to ensure we are equipped to deal with any scenario we are presented with. I also want to thank our families for their support over the years we have all been involved in mines rescue. I have no doubt my team is the best mines rescue team in the world.'

The team are eligible to represent Australia at the International Mines Rescue Competition to be held in Russia next year.

Despite not taking out the top prize, Moranbah North and Broadmeadow are thrilled with a podium finish. Moranbah North captain Scott Ryan said 'The teams we were competing against were the best of the best, but I don't think any of us were better than anyone else. It all comes down to who makes less mistakes on the day, but every competitor has proven themselves worthy just by getting to this point.'



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NSW Women in Mining Awards announced

The achievements of women in the NSW mining sector will be celebrated at a new event in 2018 with the support of super fund Mine Wealth + Wellbeing (Mine) and a number of leading NSW businesses.

The NSW Minerals Council will present the NSW Women in Mining Awards with Mine, the not-for-profit industry super fund, at a special event in Sydney in late March.

This partnership will see Mine co-host the NSW Women in Mining Awards event and present the Exceptional Woman in Mining Award at the NSW Mining Industry & Suppliers Annual Dinner at NSW Parliament. Both events will be held on the same day.

Mine's Chief Engagement Officer Glenda Abraham said they are delighted to help highlight the impressive work of women breaking new ground and leading the way in our industry.

"It's great to again support women in mining through this fantastic awards program, which is an important way to recognise and celebrate the extraordinary achievements of women in the resource sector," Glenda said.

"We believe that building a successful career is essential to building a secure financial future. So whether it's at work through programs like this or on your personal financial journey, we can't wait to help more women get on the road to financial wellbeing."

BHP is also supporting this event strongly as a Silver Partner and will present awards in four categories - Exceptional Young Woman, Outstanding Tradeswoman/Operator/Technician, Gender Diversity Champion and Excellence in Company Programs and Performance.

The company is committed to workplace diversity and has set an aspirational target of achieving gender balance by 2025.

"We're proud to support the 2018 NSW Women in Mining



Awards as another demonstration of this important goal," James Palmer, BHP Billiton Mitsui Coal (BMC) and New South Wales Energy Coal (NSWEC) Asset President said.

"BHP achieved an increase of 2.9% in female representation in the last financial year, just shy of our 3% goal, and now women comprise more than 20% of our workforce. There are 100 more female leaders in our company today than a year ago, which has made a noticeable difference to how we approach and make decisions, and how it feels to work in our business."

NSW Minerals Council CEO Stephen Galilee thanked Mine and BHP for their sponsorship and leadership in diversity in the workplace.

"These awards recognise the achievements of women in NSW mining in various stages of their careers, as well as company initiatives that support or retain women working in mining," he said.

"It's great that we can put this event on with the support of these leading businesses who share a desire to see women achieve in the mining industry."



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A man went to his lawyer and told him, "My neighbour owes me \$500 and he won't pay up. What should I do?"

"Do you have any proof he owes you the money?" asked the lawyer.

"Nope," replied the man.

"OK, then write him a letter asking him for the \$5,000 he owed you," said the lawyer.

"But it's only \$500," replied the man.

"Precisely. That's what he will reply and then you'll have your proof!"



A husband and wife had been married for 60 years and had no secrets except for one.

The woman kept in her closet a shoe box that she forbade her husband from ever opening. But when she was on her deathbed—and with her blessing—he opened the box and found a crocheted doll and \$95,000 in cash.

"My mother told me that the secret to a happy marriage was to never argue," she explained. "Instead, I should keep quiet and crochet a doll."

Her husband was touched. Only one doll was in the box—that meant she'd been angry with him only once in 60 years.

"But what about all this money?" he asked.

"Oh," she said, "that's the money I made from selling the dolls."



Two young boys were spending the night at their grandparents. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers when the youngest one began praying at the top of his lungs. "I PRAY FOR A BICYCLE...I PRAY FOR A NEW NINTENDO...I PRAY FOR A NEW 4K TV..."

His older brother leaned over and nudged the younger brother and said, "Why are you shouting your prayers? God isn't deaf."

To which the little brother replied, "No, but Gramma is!"



A man was on a walking holiday in a foreign country. He became hungry so decided to ask at a stranger's home for something to eat.

The lady of the house invited him in and served him a bowl of soup by the fire.

There was a little pig running around the kitchen - running up to the visitor and giving him a great deal of attention. The visitor commented that he had never seen a pig this friendly.

The housewife replied: "Ummm, he's not that friendly. That's his bowl you're using"



A man is driving home, when is pulled over by a patrolman for a broken blinker. The cop looks into the guys' car and sees a collection of knives in the backseat.

"Sir," the cop says. "Why do you have all those knives?"

"They're for my juggling act," the man says.

"I don't believe you," says the cop. "Prove it." So the man gets out of his car and begins juggling the knives. At the same time, a car with two guys in it drives by.

"Man," says the first guy. "I'm glad I quit drinking. These new sobriety tests are hard."

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Leadership is not about men in suits. It is a way of life for those who know who they are and are willing to be their best to create the life they want to live."

- Kathleen Schafer

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