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From the Editor



As we head towards the end of the year, many will take a short break and possibly reflect on quite a tumultuous year.

This year has seen many changes, including higher inflation, higher interest rates, the Ukraine war, a change in Federal Government, changes in industrial relations and Covid-19 continuing to have its impacts.

Sometimes in business, you can feel a bit powerless against external forces, especially when they are unexpected.

You may not be able to control these external forces but you are certainly in charge of how you prepare and react to changes.

One thing you can be certain of in today's world is change and the businesses that excel in these conditions are those that are resilient and agile.

It is never more important to ensure that the fundamentals of your business are strong and that you are ready to make changes when circumstances change.

Change can sometimes be a scary word for businesspeople. It is much more comfortable to continue operating your business as it has previously and using what has worked in the past. The problem with change is it can disrupt your carefully developed plans and bring new challenges. But change also brings opportunities and we would be foolish to disregard these.

The natural reaction to uncertainty is often to bunker down, tightening expenditure and pedalling faster. Whilst some of these actions are often wise, it is also important not to disregard business opportunities or you may succeed in a self-fulfilling prophesy of a downturn.

If you are looking at cutting expenditure, carefully consider the impacts this is likely to cause for your business. Are the returns greater than the expenditure?

As we enter the New Year, there is a degree of negative commentary but, in the whole, the outlook not terrible economically.

A recent OECD report forecasts economic growth of 1.9% for 2023. Whilst this is not anywhere record growth, it is fact the sixth strongest of all OECD countries.

Most unemployment forecasts for 2023 are for a high of 4.5%, quite a respectable figure in historical terms.

While the economic outlook may not be completely calm, a major storm is also not expected. As always how well you navigate will ultimately determine the success of your business.

Hunter Business Review wishes its readers, advertisers and story submitters a merry and restorative festive period and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2023.

Garry Hardie
Editor and Publisher

ON THIS MONTH'S COVER

Five local businesswomen featured in this month's Women in Business feature starting on page 20 – Monica Toews Brown from Red Insight, Lee de Winton from Pacific Aerospace Consulting, Fiona Nelson from Moray & Agnew Lawyers, Joy Robbins from Atwea and Leah Thomas from Out of the Square.

Planning a business FUNCTION? WORK PARTY, CONFERENCE, MEETING, WORKSHOP, EXPO OR OTHER BUSINESS EVENT



View the 2022-23 Hunter Business Function Guide for information on venues and supporting services.

www.hbrmag.com.au/2022-hunter-business-function-guide

Defence contract delivers \$100 million boost to the Hunter

The Australian Government has signed a Facility Services Deed worth more than \$100 million with BAE Systems Australia to expand the F-35A depot maintenance capability at Newcastle Airport.

This Deed will see the expansion from two to six maintenance bays, enabling BAE Systems Australia to progressively meet the forecasted service and maintenance demand for Australia's F-35A Lightning II fleet.

Minister for Defence Industry, the Hon Pat Conroy MP said this expansion will be accompanied with an increase in workforce in the Hunter, as the sustainment phase for the F-35 program continues to be established.

"The construction at BAE System Australia's existing South Hangar facility at Newcastle Airport site will provide opportunities for local jobs, to local suppliers and subcontractors," Minister Conroy said.

"All 72 F-35A jets will be sustained and upgraded at this facility in Newcastle over the next three decades, bringing opportunities and jobs to the region for years to come."

As a key partner, BAE Systems Australia's work on the F-35 program will support around 750 jobs directly and indirectly across Australia by 2025.

"Australia's participation in the F-35 Global program continues to deliver significant benefits to the Hunter region and broader national economy," Minister Conroy said.

"To date, more than 70 Australian companies have won more than \$3 billion in production and sustainment contracts as part of the global F-35 Program."

BAE Systems Australia Managing Director Defence Delivery, Andrew Gresham, said: "We welcome the Commonwealth's



announcement and look forward to working alongside the Royal Australian Air Force and our industry partners to deliver this vital capability.

"Our established team has deep knowledge of the F-35 and will deliver a proven and collaborative approach that focuses on dependable delivery today and innovative ways of sustaining the F-35 fleet into the future.

"This is another example of how BAE Systems is helping to deliver the next generation of air capability and building local industry to help keep Australia secure."

Fifty-seven F-35A Lightning II jets have been accepted by Australia to date with the full fleet of 72 on track to be delivered by the end of 2023. The Australian Government is currently considering the next stage of the project which will look to support further expansion of the Hunter maintenance depot beyond six bays from 2026.



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Port of Newcastle to host international leaders at GreenPort Congress Oceania

Port of Newcastle will showcase its sustainability achievements to the world when it brings the first GreenPort Congress to be held in Oceania to Newcastle from 15-17 February 2023.

The conference will be first time the long-running GreenPort Congress is held in the Southern Hemisphere, bringing together port professionals, industry representatives and academia from around the world to discuss the latest in sustainable environmental practices and emerging legislation, alongside practical ways ports can reduce their carbon footprints.

Port of Newcastle CEO Craig Carmody said the GreenPort Congress Oceania 2023 will provide a key collaboration and learning opportunity for port leaders who are also committed to leading the way in environmental management and sustainably operated ports.

"Forming partnerships and sharing knowledge are critical to our ability to create a safe, sustainable, environmentally and socially responsible Port for the future," Mr Carmody said.

"At Port of Newcastle we pride ourselves on not just talking about what we can do, but in taking action, and to date we have made great inroads in delivering against our ambitious environmental, social and governance targets and objectives.

"The inaugural GreenPorts Congress Oceania provides an exciting opportunity for the Port, as the host, to share our learnings and collaborate with a broad group of like-minded stakeholders, while showcasing beautiful Newcastle to the world."

The GreenPort Congress, now in its 17th year, attracts more than 200 attendees from 30 countries and is expected to further enhance Newcastle's reputation as a green, global city and destination of choice for business-related tourism.

City of Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nemes congratulated the Port of Newcastle for securing the GreenPort Congress as a further commitment to the city's shared environmental sustainability goals.

"Both the City and the Port are now powered by 100% renewable energy in our operations, and we are firmly committed to working as key partners to continue to drive environmental sustainability outcomes for our community," Cr Nemes said.

"The GreenPort Congress provides a wonderful opportunity to further highlight our strong partnership on the global stage and to provide our significant insights into the economic and social benefits of embedding sustainable practices into our operations."

Port of Newcastle was the first port in Australia and New Zealand to become a member of the international EcoPorts network and continues to be a strong advocate for the benefits of the EcoPorts initiative.

The Port is also considered a global leader in sustainability best practice, having recently retained its five-star GRESB rating and increased its overall score to 95 out of a possible 100 points in 2022.

Chief Financial Officer Nick Livesey said the conference follows the latest successful GreenPort Congress meeting in October hosted by the Port of Antwerp-Bruges in Belgium.

"Port of Newcastle is committed to driving the principles of sustainability in all aspects of our business, so to be able to facilitate an international forum that focusses on practical options for addressing the challenges facing ports will benefit not just ourselves but ports around the world."

The GreenPort Congress Oceania 2023 will be chaired by Science Coordinator EcoPorts, EcoSLC and current chair of GreenPort Congress and Cruise, Christopher Wooldridge and will conclude with a half-day port tour.

\$100k payday for Lake Mac events and festivals

Almost \$100,000 will be distributed to local community groups in round two of Lake Macquarie City Council's Events and Festivals Funding Program.

Among the vast and varied recipients was Hunter Opera, with \$12,000 going toward the Lake Macquarie Philharmonic Orchestra's 'An American Dream' program, heading to Warners Bay Theatre next October. The musical extravaganza will feature young virtuoso Zachary Donoghoe performing the clarinet concerto and noted Hunter jazz singer Heather Price.

Hunter Opera founder Mercia Buck said the grant would help bring the spectacular to life.

"This is an exciting opportunity to unleash the visceral talent of the orchestra and showcase some incredible local performers," she said.

Other artistic ventures, including the Dobell Festival of Arts and Craft and a 'Textile Taster' workshop - where participants can get hands on with felting, fabric printing and Japanese textile techniques - were also approved for funding.

ANZAC Day functions and sports events were other prominent round two recipients, with the Youth 'Slash and Bash' surf and skate competition, 2023 Open Skiff Championships and the Hunter Open Judo Championships among those backed by the program.

Lake Macquarie Mayor Kay Fraser said the chosen events celebrated the city's culture.

"We prioritise engaging, entertaining and surprising events and festivals that attract visitors and contribute to diverse and economically strong communities," she said.

A total of 33 groups received a share of \$98,693 in funding through this round of the program.

Dates and application details for the 2023 Events and Festivals Funding Program are available at www.lakemac.com.au.



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2022 HMRI Award winners announced

The winners of the 2022 Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) awards were announced on 10 November at NEX in Newcastle in front of friends, families, HMRI staff and supporters.

With \$90,000 in prize money on offer, the HMRI Awards honour the best overall researcher, mid-career researcher, early career researcher and research team.

This year's overall winner for Research Excellence is Professor Brett Nixon from the HMRI Infertility and Reproduction Research Program. His research focuses on genetic and environmental factors that impact sperm quality.

The Mid-Career Researcher of the Year is Professor Pradeep Tanwar from the HMRI Cancer Detection and Therapy research program. Pradeep specialises in gynaecological research and is the Director of the University of Newcastle's Global Centre for Gynaecological Diseases.

The Early Career Researcher of the Year is Dr Michelle Kennedy from the HMRI Equity and Health and Wellbeing research program. Dr Kennedy created a smoking cessation program called Sista Quit for pregnant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The Research Team Excellence Award has gone to the Physically Active Children in Education team (PACE), headed up by Dr Nicole Nathan from the HMRI Active Living Research Program. This project aims to improve the delivery of physical activity by teachers in primary schools.

HMRI Director, Professor Frances Kay-Lambkin says the researchers recognised this year are doing globally relevant work.

"HMRI's purpose is to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and these researchers are having an impact on the health of people everywhere," said Professor Kay-Lambkin.

"This recognition and the award funding gives our researchers the ability to push further and faster in their chosen fields. Huge congratulations to them and sincere thanks to the donors who make these awards possible."

The winners and finalists were:

HMRI Award for Research Excellence (\$20,000)

Finalists: Professor Geoff Isbister and Professor Brett Nixon

Winner: Professor Brett Nixon

Director's Award for Mid-Career Research (\$20,000)

Finalists: Associate Professor Matt Dun, Associate Professor Jay Horvat and Professor Pradeep Tanwar

Winner: Professor Pradeep Tanwar

Professor Brett Nixon, winner of the HMRI Award for Research Excellence



HMRI Award for Early Career Research (\$20,000)

Finalists: Dr Michelle Kennedy and Dr Rachel Sutherland

Winner: Dr Michelle Kennedy

HMRI Foundation Research Team Excellence Award (\$30,000)

Finalists: No Money No Time Team (led by Laureate Professor Clare Collins) and Physically Active Children in Education (PACE) Team (led by Dr Nicole Nathan)

Winner: Physically Active Children in Education (PACE) Team (led by Dr Nicole Nathan)



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Newcastle on track to capture more of lucrative business tourism market

Large-scale business events have returned to Newcastle following a COVID-enforced industry hiatus, with more than 360 delegates attending the city for the 2022 RSL NSW Annual State Congress.

The two-day conference which was held in November at the Newcastle Convention and Exhibition Centre follows on from the International Conference on Emerging Advanced Nanomaterials earlier in the month, which featured leading scientific figures including three Nobel Laureates and attracted more than 500 delegates over five days, representing approximately \$1 million in economic value.

Both conferences were supported by City of Newcastle's event sponsorship program as part of a strategic push to capture more of the lucrative business events market, which contributed over \$10.4 billion annually to the NSW economy, prior to the pandemic.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nemes said with COVID-19 restrictions now behind us, we are starting to see a growing number of face-to-face business events returning to the city.

"In March 2020, the business events industry ground to a halt in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving in-person events impacted by the necessary ongoing public health orders and restrictions," Cr Nemes said.

"However, there is now renewed optimism amongst the industry and demand to return to gathering face-to-face.

"This is welcome news for our city with business events a significant contributor to Newcastle's visitor economy through the tourism, hospitality and events sectors, with the RSL NSW Annual State Congress alone expected to generate approximately 750 room nights for local hotels and deliver more than \$300,000 in economic benefit."

Newcastle has already secured multiple business events for 2023 that will cater for between 200 and 400 delegates each, including conferences for the Australian Museums and Galleries Association, Australian College of Emergency Medicine, Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia and, Australian Christian Churches as well as the joint NSW Coastal Conference and National Coast to Coast Conference. A number of other significant business events are also in the pipeline.

Cr Nemes said Newcastle was perfectly placed to accommodate large-scale business events, with first-class conferencing and meeting facilities at privately owned and Council-run venues, while the opening of two five-star hotels added a new level of luxury to the city's accommodation choices. Cr Nemes said City of Newcastle is strategically focussed on increasing business tourism through the Newcastle Destination Management Plan.

"Of the 5.1 million visitors welcomed to Newcastle in 2019, business travellers represented 22% of both domestic and international overnight stays, with hotel occupancy levels consistently averaging 80% mid-week," Cr Nemes said.

"Tourism Australia research indicates that business travellers spend 74% more per night on average compared to leisure visitors."

City of Newcastle is a long-standing member of the Australian Association of Convention Bureaux and works with local and state partners including the University of Newcastle and Destination NSW to identify, bid for, and secure business events.

When it comes to the future of business events, Newcastle Airport CEO Dr Peter Cock said the region's potential to host large-scale international events is gearing up.

"Newcastle Airport is growing, and from 2024 our expanded terminal will have the ability to welcome hundreds of thousands of international passengers annually as a result of airfield upgrades that will cater to larger aircraft including Boeing 787s and Airbus A330s," Dr Cock said.

"This will enable direct flights between Newcastle and destinations in Asia, the Middle East and the Americas."

Hunter business leaders honoured at Business NSW Awards

Hunter business leaders have excelled at the 2022 Business Awards, held by the state's peak voice for business, Business NSW in Sydney on 18 November.

Recognising growth, entrepreneurship and excellence, the 2022 Business Awards comprise an incredibly competitive field of top businesses across the state.

Business Hunter CEO, Bob Hawes congratulated all winners and finalists, including two Hunter Region recipients - Hayley Shute of Aussie Ark for Outstanding Employee and The Hi-Vis Group for Excellence in Sustainability.

"These awards recognise the best of the best and we congratulate all winners for rising to the top of their field. Having two Hunter Region winners among this esteemed group highlights the incredible innovation and leadership across the region and we commend both Hayley and the Hi-Vis Group for their efforts," said Mr Hawes.

Mr Hawes said as we near the end of the working year, the awards were a great opportunity to reflect on growth.

"These awards are a great opportunity to stop and take stock of achievement and when viewed in light of floods, bushfires, pandemic fallout and challenging economic conditions, is testament to the incredible resilience and agility of our business community."

Ben Travers wins ifa Investment Adviser of the Year

Prosperity's Associate Director Ben Travers has won the prestigious ifa Investment Adviser of the Year Award. The ifa Excellence awards have rewarded the most exceptional financial advisers and businesses across the country, showcasing their achievements and honouring their efforts in contributing to the sector.

Hamish Landreth, Wealth Management Director at Prosperity commended Ben on his achievement and said "We are very proud to have Ben as part of the Prosperity team and are delighted that his hard work, knowledge and passion for his clients has been recognised. This recognition of Ben's considerable experience is a great asset for our clients and will serve to strengthen and broaden our financial advisory capability."

Ben Travers, Associate Director at Prosperity Advisers Group, said that he was humbled to be recognised and proud to be named as the ifa Investment Adviser of the Year.

"Providing financial advice is personal and that's the approach I take. Working with my clients gives me incredible satisfaction, I highly value my interaction with them and the trust they place in me to help them to achieve their financial goals," he said.



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The 'Uber' of recycling comes to Maitland

In a first for the region, Maitland City Council has partnered with start up RecycleSmart to offer a free recycling home collection service to the community.

Maitland residents can now have problem waste that can't be put in the yellow bin like batteries, e-waste and clothes up from their house and recycled as part of a free monthly subscription (two bag maximum – same size as shopping bags). For only \$5, residents can also have more than two bags of recycling picked up on demand.

For Council's Manager Environment and Sustainability Catherine Pepper, this is a convenient sustainability solution that will have a huge benefit to both the community and the environment.

"Many of us find it hard to get the time to take problem waste like old clothes, batteries and lightbulbs to recycling points, but with this new program you can book it for free, bag it up, take it out the front and someone will come and get it for you. Problem solved!"

Everything that is picked up through the program is recycled which reduces the amount of waste going into the ground, adds to the circular economy and creates future uses.

Giorgio Baracchi, CEO and co-founder of RecycleSmart says "we are here to change the way people feel about recycling, so they recycle more things, more often. We achieve that by making recycling digital, fun and easy. We believe recycling should be something you look forward to doing."

This program is available until 30 June 2023 and is for recycling only, and is in addition to our kerbside bulky waste collection service which is planned for the first half of next year. Crucially, this initiative will allow Council to collect data on the best approaches to keep valuable recyclables and problem waste separate to the bulky waste stream so we have the best chance of recovering and recycling these materials.

The initiative is a response to the community's overwhelming support for increasing our efforts in recycling and resource recovery, with the goal of working towards the State Government set targets of 80% waste materials diverted away from landfill by 2030.

Eden Brae Homes' \$70 million Hunter investment

Eden Brae Homes has strengthened its investment in the Hunter, launching a \$10 million state-of-the-art regional headquarters, complete with an immersive design studio at Beresfield.

The development of the unparalleled commercial centre incorporating the design space - Studio Eden - saw local construction company Drayton Group employ hundreds of contractors during construction. Eden Brae's commitment to the region goes beyond bricks and mortar, with the company supporting more than 60 direct office jobs, in addition to an ongoing sub-contracting workforce of trades across all their new home sites and supplier network.

Eden Brae Homes has effectively doubled down on the Hunter, investing \$70 million in the last year alone through new home builds, the construction of their Hunter headquarters and flagship design studio, direct employment, local supplier, and subcontracting workforce.

"We are heavily investing here to support the resilience of the Hunter community and housing market, keep jobs local and help sustain the regional building industry," Eden Brae Homes Director, Todd Symons said.

"Beresfield was chosen as the best location in NSW for us to base our regional headquarters and exclusive customer design studio, given the strong population growth forecast for the nearby Maitland region and expansive supplier network on the doorstep," he said.

"With working from home now a reality for many, tree-changers are taking advantage of the rural estates across the Hunter Valley



and more downsizers are choosing the coastal regional centres. Each day there are 15,000 commuters between Newcastle, Central Coast and Sydney, this is where we need to be."

The impressive commercial building is set over 2,000 square metres and was designed by award-winning architect Bates Smart who's design and delivery of cutting-edge commercial architecture is renowned, with bespoke design and carbon footprint considerations at the forefront of each project.

In line with Eden Brae Homes ISO 14001 Environment Accreditation, the development includes a significant investment in renewable energy with a solar power system that will see the building operating completely off the grid.

Eden Brae's commitment to the Hunter is further strengthened by the recent opening of three display homes at Thornton, two at Hereford Hill in Lochinvar, as well as the already established display homes in Huntlee, Waterford Living, Thornton and Warnervale on the Central Coast. It has invested \$15 million into display homes across the Hunter and Central Coast.

Prosperity's record year results in Top 100 Ranking

Prosperity was placed at #37 in Australia's Top 100 Accounting Firms listing. The 2022 listing shows revenue jumped by 14.5% across Australia's 100 biggest accounting firms as clients grappling with the pandemic and economic downturn sought tax, compliance and refinancing advice.

Revenue at mid-tier firms had a respectable revenue growth of 9.1% to take their turnover to a combined \$2.39 billion while firms worth between \$10 million and \$25 million grew by a similar amount, according to the Australian Financial Review Top 100 accounting firms list for 2022.

Commenting on the result, Prosperity Founder and CEO Allan McKeown said, "It was a record year for our firm, driven by the collaborative nature of the Prosperity client service offering. Our ability to bring financial experts together from across various disciplines to solve complex client challenges resonates with time poor clients seeking smart advice."

Prosperity Advisers Group employs over 130 staff throughout its Sydney, Brisbane and Newcastle offices.





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University Employability Excellence Awards

Innovative thinkers, Google interns and local businesses going above and beyond to give students exceptional workplace experiences have all been celebrated at the University of Newcastle's 2022 Employability Excellence Awards. The awards celebrate the achievements of students and the work of staff and industry partners in preparing life-ready graduates, through Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences, or professional placements.

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Mark Hoffman explained the awards reflect the university's increased focus on providing students with practical experience as part of their degrees.

"Our University is committed to creating graduates who are equipped with the skills to succeed. Work Integrated Learning provides students with real, on the job experience that helps them to develop skills that prepare them not only for their future workplace, but also for life after they graduate."

"Last year over 30,000 practical learning experiences were undertaken by students. The most employable graduates develop a portfolio of experiences that demonstrate essential workplace skills that build on the knowledge of their degree.

"We understand that these skills are often learnt away from the classroom and beyond textbooks, which is why WIL is so important."

This year awards recognised eight students who have excelled in their placement, five university staff and 13 businesses who have helped students to have an impactful practical work placement experience.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alex Zelinsky AO explained the importance of recognising the impact of staff and businesses in the awards.

"A Work Integrated Learning experience can give students meaningful, first-hand experience in their chosen field to help them get a taste of their future career and understand the areas that they enjoy the most.

"As a University that is committed to our region, we also recognise the contributions of businesses who take on students.

"For businesses, taking on a student not only gives them practical experience, it creates a pipeline of future talent, helping businesses to identify high quality graduates and attract and retain students before they graduate.

"We also recognise that our staff play an integral role in helping to create and facilitate these experiences for students and I thank them for this commitment and dedication."

The winners were:

Students

- **Student Employability Excellence Award:** Abigail Hall
- **Student Employability Excellence Award:** Mitchell Burton
- **Student Intern/Cadet of the Year:** Jessica Haugh
- **Work Integrated Learning Student of the Year:** Brittany Sharpe
- **Work Integrated Learning Student of the Year:** Alix Loades
- **Work Integrated Learning Student of the Year:** Stephanie Kelly
- **Work Integrated Learning Student of the Year:** Maggie Fulwood
- **Student Entrepreneur of the Year:** Sarah Williams

Staff

Work Integrated Learning Staff Member of the Year

- Hemal Patel
- Cameron Beard and Kim Maund (Joint)
- Meegan McHugh
- Peter Gogarty
- Saskia Behan

Industry

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Work Integrated Learning Hall of Fame

- Hunter School of Performing Arts
- NSW Health Pathology – Forensic Medicine Social Work
- The Dietetics Department at Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital
- Health Campus
- Snowy Hydro
- St John the Baptist Primary School
- Barwon Health
- Queensland X-Ray
- Regional Youth Support Services Inc
- Australian Taxation Office (Newcastle Office)
- Newcastle High School Cooks Hill Campus
- Callaghan Colleges
- Early Links

Jayco Newcastle wins NSW Dealer of the Year

Jayco Newcastle has again been recognised for its continued business excellence, taking out NSW Dealer of the Year at the 2022 Annual Awards of Excellence, the fifth time it has collected this prestigious award.

The leading caravan business was handed the win on November 8, 2022 at the awards coordinated by the industry's peak industry body, the NSW Caravan and Camping Industry Association (CCIA) and the Land Lease Living Industry Association. The awards recognise businesses and individuals that excel in terms of service, innovation and best practice.

Jayco Newcastle Managing Director, Damian Charleson, said the win is a reflection of the entire team at the dealership.

"Our focus is to really push for ongoing change, while adding value for our customers. I am so proud of our team and how they are each continuing to grow within our business."

This distinction is another achievement in Jayco Newcastle's exemplary history having taken out the award in 2015, 2016 and 2017 as well as being subsequently inducted into the Hall of Fame for this run before winning the award again in 2019.

The dealership's 2022 win follows a two-year hiatus from the awards in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

CCIA NSW President Mark Lindsay said it was an honour to award the hard work and dedication shown by Jayco Newcastle and the rest of the industry.

"As our industry bounces back post-covid, businesses like Jayco Newcastle continue to make a positive contribution to our economy and we are pleased to be recognising the great achievements of our industry through these Awards of Excellence."

CCIA Chief Executive Officer Lyndel Gray said the caravanning sector provided a boost for the tourism industry in particular, for which caravan and camping holidays now account for over 13 million domestic trips each year.

"The caravan and camping sector generates over \$4 billion in economic activity across the state each year, directly employing close to 10,000 people and supporting the creation of a further 50,000 jobs," she said.

"As our industry bounces back post-covid, these businesses continue to make a positive contribution to our economy and we are pleased to be recognising the great achievements of our industry through these awards."



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## Sixteen projects to boost Newcastle's night-time economy

A roaming music festival, contemporary dance party, and quarterly food, art and wine trails will attract more visitors into the city centre at night, increase spending at local businesses and showcase local creatives thanks to funding from City of Newcastle's special business rate.

West Best Bloc Fest will return in 2023 to showcase more than 80 local music artists as one of 16 projects awarded a share of almost \$800,000 through the City Centre and Darby Street Special Business Rate (SBR) funding program. Many of the projects complement the vision of City of Newcastle's Newcastle After Dark Strategy, which is helping to guide the development of a safe, vibrant night-time economy in the city centre.

Despite the economic downturn, Newcastle experienced the highest increase in night-time establishment growth across Australian cities during the past 12 months according to the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors' Measuring the Australian Night Time Economy 2020-21 report.

Deputy Lord Mayor Declan Clausen said successful initiatives like City of Newcastle's SBR funding program provided invaluable support for the city's CBD business precincts and created vibrant, activated spaces for the community and visitors to enjoy.

"Newcastle's night-time economy accounts for 13% of its workforce, which is significantly higher than the national average," Cr Clausen said.

"Supporting initiatives through SBR funding like West Best Bloc Fest are proven to not only attract a welcome influx of visitors into the city centre but also drive new and expanded economic opportunities for our local hospitality and arts & cultural sector.

"As highlighted in the Night Time Economy 2020-21 report, City of Newcastle has a track record of creating more vibrant, activated spaces at night through programs like Locally Made and Played, its interactive outdoor Night Time Galleries project and SBR program."

On the back of delivering West Best Bloc Fest 2022 in October, organiser Dylan Oaks said the successful event would return in 2023 thanks to continued SBR support by City of Newcastle.

"Newcastle's music scene is the healthiest I've seen it. We just delivered a sold-out event on 2 October showcasing 100% Novocastrian talent," Mr Oaks said.

"The SBR funding received for West Best Bloc Fest benefits multiple hospitality venues around our local West End block. This roaming event increases the vibrancy of the West End by engaging visitors in an interesting way, which leads to increased visitation in the area and spending in many of our city's hospitality venues."

Special Business Rates are collected from businesses in Newcastle City Centre / Darby Street, Hamilton, Mayfield, New Lambton and Wallsend for the promotion, beautification and development of those precincts.

Other successful projects under this round of City Centre and Darby Street funding include the mouth-watering return of Newcastle Food Month, Summer Shakespeare in Civic Park, West Walk food, art and wine trail, a month-long live painting festival and the highly popular Chalk the Walk 3D art trail.

*Councillor Carol Duncan with The Family Hotel owner and West Best Bloc Fest organiser Dylan Oaks pictured with local artists*



## University opens swimming Performance Hub

Elite swimmers will now be able to train in Newcastle with the University of Newcastle officially opening its new NUsport Performance Hub, created in partnership with Swimming NSW and the NSW Institute of Sport. The performance hub will operate from the University's recently refurbished swimming pool at NUsport, Callaghan, and athletes will be coached by internationally recognised swimmer, Sander Ganzevles.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alex Zelinsky, AO said the University was proud to launch the new Performance Hub in partnership with Swimming NSW and NSW Institute of Sport.

"Our University is committed to supporting people to achieve their best and we recently upgraded our pool to provide the region with state-of-the-art facilities that have enabled us to host this program.

"Previously the closest hub for swimmers in our region was in Sydney, which meant significant travel. The new Performance Hub has given swimmers in our region a pathway to representative swimming and will mean they will be able to continue their training without having to leave our region.

"We already support athletes across a range of sporting fields to study and compete through our Elite Athlete Program. We're thrilled to now partner with Swimming NSW and NSW Institute of Sport, who are leading institutions, to provide world-class coaching in our world-class facility.

"Offering this training program will help more swimmers and students reach their greatest potential both in and out of the pool."

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter, Hon. Taylor Martin said the new Hub would provide better opportunities for the region.

"The NUsport Performance Hub is a fantastic opportunity to provide a pathway for local, talented athletes to reach the highest levels in their sport while training in their own backyard," Mr Martin said.

"The performance hub will operate from the University's recently refurbished swimming pool at NUsport, Callaghan, and athletes will be coached by internationally recognised swimmer, Sander Ganzevles."

Minister for Sport Alistair Henskens said NSW is the greatest contributor to Australia's success in the pool and the Hub will support athletes to achieve podium performances.

"This partnership cements our collective regional strategy to provide better access to world class facilities and training environments for our future Olympians," Mr Henskens said.

NSWIS CEO Kevin Thompson said the provision of performance staff was essential to the success of the Hub.

"NSWIS is proud to co-fund with Swimming NSW the employment of a high-performance coach to lead the NUsport Performance Hub program and support the growth of development of local coaches," Mr Thompson said.

The Hub currently has five athletes, with more swimmers from the region to be selected into the program over the coming months. Sander has previously held coaching roles with the German and Dutch Swimming Federations and most recently with Cairns Stingrays.



## Hunter businesses honoured at NSW Tourism Awards

Hunter business leaders have shone at the NSW Tourism Industry Council's prestigious NSW Tourism Awards.

Held on 17 November in the iconic Luna Park Sydney's Big Top, over 450 industry representatives gathered for the first time in three years to celebrate the state's outstanding tourism businesses.

Business Hunter CEO, Bob Hawes congratulated all winners and finalists, highlighting strong representation across the Hunter and Mid North Coast.

"Our region is well served by businesses seeking to push the bar higher and we're proud to see their efforts recognised in such a meaningful way.

"It's been an incredibly challenging few years with back-to-back natural disaster events, the pandemic and energy and fuel prices all putting pressure on business operators in this sector," said Mr Hawes.

"The visitor economy provides vital economic diversification for our region and will play an increasingly important role as we continue to navigate transformation associated with the evolution of our traditional energy industries.

"These awards offer an opportunity to celebrate well-earned recognition and help foster a culture of excellence that will see us remain a region of choice for domestic and international visitors alike."

*Michelle Will and Peili Zhang accepting the Adventure Tourism award on behalf of the Balloon Aloft team*



The awards are managed by the NSW Tourism Industry Council powered by Business NSW, the state's peak business organisation, and supported by the NSW Government via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

Winners in the designated national award categories will represent NSW at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards to be held in Sydney, 17 March 2023.

Among the local winners was Balloon Aloft who took out the Gold in the Adventure Tourism category.

Margan Wines and Restaurant also took home Gold, winning the Excellence in Food Tourism category.

MidCoast Council's tourism brand Barrington Coast was also celebrating, taking Gold in two categories – the Local Government Award for Tourism, and Tourism Marketing and Campaigns.

Other local successes included:

- Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary who took out Silver on Tourism Attractions category
- Beyond Ballooning who went home with Silver in the Tour and/or Transport Operators category as well as Bronze in Adventure Tourism
- Bent on Food took out the Silver in Tourism Restaurants and Catering Service
- Aussie Ark won a Bronze for the Tourist Attractions category
- Sea Horse Diamond Beach won the Bronze for Excellence in Accessible Tourism

**The full list of winners can be viewed at <https://www.businessnsw.com/members/nsw-tourism-awards-2022/winners-2022>**



## Hunter Water wins NSW Sustainability Award

Hunter Water has thanked the Lower Hunter community for respecting the throne after winning the Communications for Impact Award in this year's NSW Sustainability Awards.

The Respect the Throne campaign came about in response to the COVID-19 pandemic's toilet paper shortage, which saw an excess of non-degradable items being flushed, creating more blockages in pipes and pump stations. With a quick operational solution unavailable, Hunter Water delivered a message to the community through a catchy jingle played on television and social media to drive awareness and changes in flushing behaviour.

Hunter Water Group Manager Operations, Glen Robinson, said the award was a big win for the organisation in more ways than one.

"We are happy to report that 93% of our customers now understand that they can only flush the three Ps: poo, pee and (toilet) paper. I want to give a big thanks to our customers and community for listening to our message and being quick to adapt their behaviour.

"Since launching the campaign, we have seen a reduction in overflows attributed to blockages and fewer blockages in our network systems, which has reduced our reactive maintenance costs.

"To capitalise on this success, we have released a sequel to the campaign, introducing another important message to help us continue to change flushing behaviour in our community and minimise fatbergs, the large masses of congealed fat and solid waste that form in the sewerage system.

"The message is simple: Fats and oils don't mix with wipes and tissues. It's vital to remember that anything you put down the drain or kitchen sink will end up in the same place as items flushed down the toilet," said Mr Robinson.

While there has been a reduction in blockages in the system thanks to the campaign, fatbergs remain an issue.

"At Morpeth Wastewater Treatment Works, for example, we typically capture a build-up of about four tonnes of non-degradable items each month through the screening system at our inlet works.

"We're keen to reduce the impact of fatbergs on our system. Our community can help by being mindful of what they flush down the toilet and put down the sink," said Mr Robinson.

For some simple things you can do to prevent sewer problems occurring, visit [www.hunterwater.com.au/respect](http://www.hunterwater.com.au/respect)

## Premium accommodation opens at Jimmys Beach

A \$5 million premium eco-cabin precinct for guests at Jimmys Beach is now officially open after Reflections Holiday Parks and community and industry representatives, cut the ribbon on 3 November to celebrate the new deluxe addition to the park.

The new guest offering includes eight new cabins for families of five, an easy access cabin for up to four people, a luxury salt water pool and high-speed Wi-Fi for entertainment. Two new glamping safari tents will also be available for that unique luxury camping vibe.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter, the Hon. Taylor Martin attended the celebration of the new precinct and said the investment in quality accommodation at the Reflections Holiday Park on Crown Land will attract more visitors and strengthen regional tourism and business spending.

"The diverse range of high-quality accommodation now provided by Jimmys Beach is good news for the region, with incoming guests supporting local businesses and experience operators," Mr Martin said. "These guests can also holiday knowing they are supporting a business which invests in sustainable travel and focusses on social and environmental good."

Reflections Holiday Parks CEO Nick Baker said it was wonderful to see the local community celebrating the new park improvements with representatives from the Hawks Nest Golf



Club, Benchmark Hotel, local Surf Life Saving Club and Myall Coast Chamber of Commerce and Tourism in attendance.

"Reflections Jimmys Beach is the gateway to amazing regional communities like Hawks Nest and the surrounding Great Lakes district with about 50,000 visitors from the park currently spending around \$2.2 million in the area," Mr Baker said.

"This visitor spend will grow to around \$3.5 million now this premium guest experience is ready for bookings in Summer and beyond."

## Reflections Holiday Parks certified a social enterprise

Reflections Holiday Parks has become the first holiday park group in the country to be certified as a social enterprise.

As a profit-for-purpose based business, Reflections Holiday Parks reinvested \$9.1 million in FY22 into their 36 holiday parks and 43 community Crown reserves, which are vital habitats for animals and plants, as well as being treasured playgrounds for regional communities and visitors.

This re-investment into communities and the environment saw \$3.5 million allocated to Crown Land reserves managed by councils and community groups, \$2.6 million to Reflections Crown Land nature reserves and \$3 million to cross-subsidise the operation of inland parks and reserves - in turn creating and maintaining jobs in regional communities.

NSW Minister for Lands and Water, the Hon. Kevin Anderson, said the certification was a significant accolade for Reflections as NSW's largest holiday park operator, welcoming 2 million visitors a year to the parks it manages on Crown land across NSW.

"Reflections has earned its honour as Australia's first certified social enterprise holiday park group due to its unique profit-for-purpose business model," Minister Anderson said.

"As well as a commitment to make its parks and reserves leaders in nature-driven holiday escapes, all profits it earns are reinvested back into the 9,289 hectares of Crown land it manages and cares for on behalf of the people of NSW."

Reflections' CEO, Nick Baker, said the certification by Social Traders reflects a growing consumer movement towards businesses that exist for social and environmental good.

"An increasing number of travellers want to reduce their environmental footprint and contribute to local communities when they travel," said Mr Baker.

"Securing social enterprise certification demonstrates that Reflections exists for social and environmental good by investing profit into local communities and the environment across NSW. It also introduces a network of social enterprise businesses that we can engage as suppliers, further enhancing our social, cultural and environmental impact.

"As well as preserving vital flora and fauna habitat, we attract 2 million visitors to regional NSW each year and encourage them to spend with local businesses and tour operators, injecting \$83.2 million into regional economies and supporting local jobs."

## CIBIS launches Enterprise Cloud Platform

CIBIS International are proud to launch their new Enterprise Cloud Platform, 'Xpect', which experts are saying fills a gap in the business management software market.

Xpect is being seen as a viable alternative to a full-blown ERP and offers businesses a contemporary, customisable, affordable 'whole of business' solution to managing every part of the business.

CIBIS considered the cloud accounting system (plus add-ons model), but research showed that SMEs were looking for a single end-to-end business solution.

To increase efficiencies and adapt to rapidly changing customer needs and expectations, some businesses have adopted this software add-ons model. The model relies on plugins, apps, custom routines and IT integration expertise. It can, however, create more complexity, risk and fragmentation. It can also increase initial setup, ongoing support and licensing costs.

CIBIS International's General Manager Mr Tony Heitmeyer said he's thrilled to be releasing Xpect to the market. "We know a big dilemma for SMEs is knowing when to migrate away from an SME accounting system, with multiple software add-ons.

"Many SMEs consider the move to a global ERP system, but it's not a feasible option for most small to medium size businesses, given cost and time to implement. We think SMEs need a practical 'fit for purpose' alternative to an ERP, which is why we developed Xpect," Tony said.

The Xpect platform brings together all business's operations into one system, enabling the management, communication and reporting of information across every business function. This includes finance, payroll, marketing, sales, website, human resources and operations. Xpect is designed to improve business

process efficiency, reduce costs and eliminate the burden of handling fragmented systems.

Leading Australian independent business software advisor, Matt Paff, Principal at Value Adders says Xpect has targeted a gap in the market.

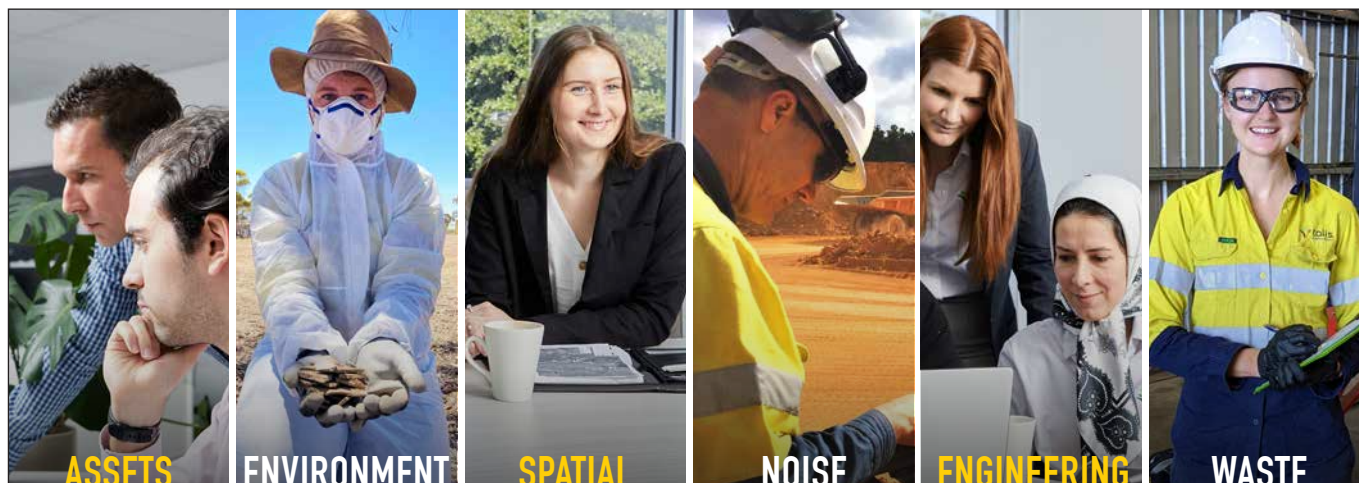
"I often talk about the SMERP Dilemma, the chasm that exists between SME solutions like Xero and MYOB AR and ERP systems like MYOB Advanced, NetSuite and Microsoft Dynamics. Xpect is one of the few products I've seen that targets this gap in the market. An end-to-end solution with the usability of SME systems without the need for add-ons and the broad functionality most often only found in ERP but at a price point that most growing SMEs can afford.

"Xpect surprises with a broad cross-section of functionality. From eCommerce to Accounting, Payroll to Job management, Inventory control to CRM – not something you expect in a solution priced for SMEs," Matt commented.

Having all these functions and features together in one system gives businesses greater control and visibility of their operations, enabling better relationships with customers and increased business growth. It also creates a seamless pathway to digitally transforming and automating a business, giving it a competitive edge.

John Brown, Managing Director of Orange Clothing Company has uses Xpect in his business and said, "I could see it would take another five products to do the whole job and I didn't want that sort of IT complexity. I wanted the reverse - something that would do the job and was easy for staff to use".

A business management system like Xpect is an integral part of any business. Being able to see a consolidated picture of your finances and operations in real time, enables business owners and managers to be agile and make more informed business decisions.



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## Preparation is the key to navigating stormier waters

**Steve Dick**  
**Newcastle Commercial**

As stormier economic weather approaches, ask yourself, as a business owner, are you ready?

This may be easier said than done, especially given that the Reserve Bank, with all its flotilla of actuaries, economists, and soothsayers, got the change in the market so wrong.

I'll leave that for others to answer. We know that we are headed into a squall, and it is up to us to take responsibility, make some hard decisions early, and guide ourselves and our businesses as best we can.

I'm not an adviser on accounting or finance and am not offering any of this as advice. Instead, here are some items to consider from a real estate perspective.

### Landlords urged to get on the front foot

Landlords, more than anybody, were asked to bear the bulk of the burden during the COVID crisis. It seemed that those making the rules were focused on property trusts and the Westfields of Australia, forgetting that the mums and dads' landlords hold most assets in terms of quantity of property, not necessarily floor space.

The only institutions that didn't miss a beat were the banks. They lovingly may have deferred payments only to have the landlords make them up later.

So, this time round, what can you do as a landlord?

1. Reach out to each of your tenants. See how they are travelling now and their expectations for the months ahead.
2. Consider if you can look at reducing debt by selling something. Right now, in mid-November, there is still

time. There is still money looking for a home which is paying reasonable yields.

3. Even if your tenant is paying the outgoings, go over your outgoing schedule with a fine-tooth comb. Those things you have let ride for years like not checking insurances, common area electricity, routine maintenance cost, and arguing your land tax valuation with the Valuer General and management, to name a few. And, if you find savings, let your tenants know you are helping them.
4. If your tenant is nearing the end of the lease (6 – 12 months) and you want them to stay, offer some incentive, like rent-free, no rental increases – remember DON'T be miserly, do something to the premises that they might want to do but can't in return for the commitment.

These are items that landlords often neglect in times of plenty, but they can be critical going forward into an economic storm. With interest rates rising, so will the available floor space, think what would you do if you lost your tenant at the height of the storm?

### Confident tenants can act now to sail smoothly into 2023

Some tenants found COVID challenging and barely survived, especially those exposed to a retail interface as the source of revenue. Many adapted and modified their ways; some were never affected and even flourished.

Here in the Hunter, I hope coal and coal spending will help us weather the storm. Simply put, thermal coal was at the time of writing at US\$351/tonne, and in September 2020, it was US\$47/tonne. The miners are spending to keep their machinery rolling. This is an endeavour to get as much black stuff on the boats before the price slips. That's, of course, unless Senator Wilkie spoils the party. The money the miners are spending is flowing through our economy.

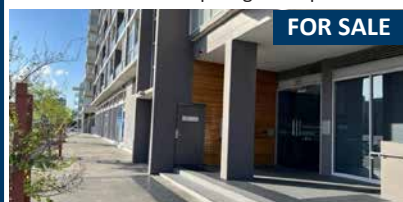
However, what can tenants do in preparation as a rule include:

1. Take some time to analyse your customer base. How will increased interest rates



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and cost of living affect their spending habits? Thus, your income stream.

2. Regarding business financing, please don't believe the bank isn't looking at your business. They are! Your business will be analysed for its vulnerability. So, get in early and see if there are better rates to lock in with your bank manager. However, understand your manager has no say in the approval decisions. The approvals or rejections will come from some faceless individual in Sydney or Melbourne, prompted by some computer analysis. It's worth the try, and your lending contact will give insights into the bank's thinking.
3. Analyse your business, look at your costs, and examine every annual contract you have. Look at all your inputs and suppliers. The lenders and suppliers are quick to pass on increases, but they only sometimes pass on reductions if you ask. Shop around for better deals. Just don't roll them over.
4. If you can speak to your landlord directly, do so. Don't bother speaking with the property manager. They rarely pass anything on. If you can, speak with the landlord now do so. Please talk about the economy and what they expect in the future. Let them know how you are travelling. Make sure you have caught up on any COVID payments before going anywhere near your landlord.
5. If you are confident in your business - approach your landlord about extending your lease. At the same time, seek some benefits such as a rent-free period, fixing the rent for 1 or 2 years, changing the lease from CPI to fixed interest rates, or improving the property that would make life easier.

As we head into Christmas, my business has changed, and I am no longer a director of MOVABLE. I am now an independent contractor with a new phone, 0400 000 947, and email [steve@newycommercial.com.au](mailto:steve@newycommercial.com.au) - I am still at a desk in MOVABLE's office. Have a lovely Christmas break, and don't leave your preparations for the storm too late.



*For further information contact  
Steve Dick on 0400 000 947*

## Property Council releases key recommendations for state election

The Property Council of Australia has released its 2023 State Election Platform, with a renewed focus on homes, infrastructure and sustainability.

Property Council's Hunter Regional Director Anita Hugo said the Hunter was Australia's largest regional economy with more than \$57 billion in economic output and it was time to unlock its full potential.

"The region is prospering, but to ensure this continues we have five key recommendations for the 2023 state election," Ms Hugo said.

"We are supported by a highly professional and skilled workforce and strong education, health, energy, resources, tourism, creative industries, manufacturing and defence sectors.

"This is underpinned by a significant and diversified property sector. At the heart of the Hunter is a number of growing catalyst city centres, undergoing transformation through public and private investment with projected population growth exceeding expectations.

"Getting the policy levers right will secure the region's future."

Five key state election recommendations for Newcastle and Hunter region:

1. Build capacity and diversity at Newcastle Airport and Newcastle Port to support growth of the regional economy. This includes the commitment of funding to and implementation of the Williamstown Special Activation Precinct.
2. Establish a Hunter infrastructure fund to unlock housing in the Hunter and extend Newcastle Mines Grouting Fund to cover NSW.
3. Deliver freight rail and passenger transport improvements that will provide a more efficient network with high frequency connections to key centres across the region. Plan for extension of the Light Rail system to Broadmeadow and Callaghan.
4. Work with community and industry to accelerate plans for Hunter Park.
5. Commit to fast rail between Newcastle and Sydney, with inclusion of Wi-fi enabled carriages, to make commuting more efficient and boost economic activity in both cities.

"What the Property Council has put on the table today is not just an aspirational plan for the future of our region - but a plan to deliver it," Ms Hugo concluded.

The Property Council's 2023 Election Platform and full list of detailed recommendations is available on the Property Council website [www.propertycouncil.com.au](http://www.propertycouncil.com.au)

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\*Approximate

# WOMEN IN BUSINESS

## Joy Robbins

People and Strategy Manager  
and member of the Strategic  
Leadership Team  
Atwea College

Atwea College was founded over 100 years ago, originally established as a way of removing barriers to education to those that did not typically avail education in its era. Targeting at the time male community members helping them unlock their potential through education, Atwea College continues with this same philosophy yet has evolved to providing education for all, to recently celebrating for the 3rd year in a row, a female student of the year.

Atwea's evolution now offers accredited courses through the Registered Training Organisation, Lifestyle Education classes, and the progressive 'Wellbeing and Education in practice' high school, Alesco Senior College, providing safe, inclusive and quality education for years 9 through 12, with a Yr 13 option to extend studies as an 'educational gap' year.

The organisation has experienced 900% fiscal growth as well as 900% head count people growth in the past 20 years. This unusual direct correlation between budget and people confirms that they can finesse business rigour through improved streamlining processes and systems, to improve the Employee & Business Value Proposition, but they can't automate their people.

These recent inhouse data analytics add value to the awareness and decision making how to continue to invest in their leaders and their people to support the new Change Management journey going from 'Good to Great'.

Joy has over 20 years Human Resources experience across SME's, NFP to Fortune 500 Companies, with HR lead roles in AUS, ANZ, APAC, EMEA, US and the Middle East. She says the varied nature has led her to foster a strong understanding of regional, cultural and people needs.

Joy holds a Master's degree in Business Administration, HR Diploma, Grad Diploma, HR Certificate, Certificate IV Training and Assessment and is also an MBTI Profile Accredited Assessor and is currently undertaking Agile Management training.

Joy's passion for people development, with accessible and quality education was evident in all her HR roles embedding Training and Development into the organisations focus, this extended through her humanitarian spirit living and working in an orphanage for a year with her family and once again developing teenage girls through education and mentoring.

This experience, coupled with a strong commercial verve and business acumen positions her as strong business partner in the People & Organisational development space.

Trust is always the typical and inevitable challenge of a new role, team, company. Going through the motions of the team cycle - Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing. Yet it can be accelerated by investment, grace, tolerance, consistency and importantly resilience.

Joy would like to see the HR industry take a proactive and empowering position in developing resilience for its leaders and people. She would like to see a change in the narrative of the stresses of Leadership, Worklife for team members, Physical, Financial & Mental health pressures to DV management from overwhelming to possible, to potential.



Joy says that empowering people doesn't need to be over engineered yet warrants some attention with our hearts, heads and budgets. Some simple examples Atwea offers include 2 days Mental Health that can be scheduled in advance to have a break or just tackle some personal administration. Currently the organisation is going through a structure change introducing new roles, and as such has invested in Emotional Intelligence and Team Building to foster resilience.

What attracts Joy as a professional, and as a person, is the difference a Strategic People Leadership role makes to an organisation.

Her advice for others is to operationally understand the needs, culture, vision, capability and capacity of the business and the people in unison.

## Monica Toews Brown

Director / Principal Consultant  
Red Insight

Red Insight is a Work Health & Safety, Environment & Quality consulting business based in Maitland.

Monica started the business in 2014, with her husband who is the Operations Manager. In the past 2-3 years the business has grown to a team of 7 and has established a large client base of over 100 local businesses.

Monica says that she always been intrigued about people and why they do the things they do. This led her to complete an honours degree in Psychology. After she graduated, Monica started with a major construction firm in Sydney, and her career grew from there. Monica's passion for understanding why people do what they do has absolutely propelled her and her safety career to where it is today.



Monica had some setbacks as a woman in the construction industry, which led her to run her own business.

Monica says "Ask anyone who has worked with me, I am highly passionate about safety and my work speaks for itself. Being a Woman in Business in the industry has its challenges, but I now make the decisions and challenges makes me even more committed to being successful."

As more and more women are proving they are extremely talented and exceptional in safety, the evolution of women in safety/construction has well and truly started. Women are leading by example and showing the younger generation, including our daughters, that women belong in construction, or any industry.

Monica says that helping to ensure loved ones come home at the end of every day is her key motivation. She also loves seeing her team develop into amazing consultants. She says the team has so much talent and passion, which makes her proud daily.

Monica's advice for setting out on a similar career path is to surround yourself with positive people who will help you get your goals. Remember, sometimes setbacks will fuel your drive to do something incredible and become someone spectacular.

## Lee de Winton

CEO

Pacific Aerospace Consulting

Pacific Aerospace Consulting is a privately owned business that started 20 years ago and has about 60 staff. It provides niche capabilities to the Australian Defence Force, including Joint Mission Planning System Operations and administration, cyber security, management of the Electronic Flight Bags and tactical data links.

Lee's career commenced when she joined the Women's Royal Naval Service at 17 and she spent the last few decades looking at 'what's next' from a professional development perspective. Originally qualifying as an Air Traffic Controller cemented Lee's adoration for all things aviation and, apart from one indulgent, interim education role, the many opportunities in aviation has been her career focus.

At the beginning the work challenges were purely the organisational structure between the Royal Navy and Women's Royal Naval Service. On transferring to the RAAF, Lee found herself the first woman in four jobs. This wasn't a conscious effort to attempt to be a trail blazing woman, it was because she wanted the interesting and challenging roles and so worked hard to ensure she had the qualifications to be able to undertake them.

For Lee the team is the most important thing and ensuring it works well. And she says she works with an amazing team. It's on the basis of that she believes they provide an exceptional service to Defence. The focus for as a group is Customer, Cost and Culture.

Lee's advice for others is that no matter what organisation you are in or what position you have, having a mentor is a great addition to your ability to work, lead, teach and operate. She



would encourage people to reach out to business leaders and ask them the same question – what advice would you share with me? But be structured; they're busy people, so have a focus on the requested information and assistance.

## Leah Thomas

Head of Client Solutions

Out of the Square

Out of the Square (OOTS) has been a media staple in Newcastle and is currently celebrating its 25th year in business.

The growth of the business has really come down to the people. Leah says they have been lucky with amazing team members, each bringing their individual expertise, and remarkable clients that put their faith in the business to grow their business, which in turn allows OOTS to expand. Leah still feels they are growing, especially with the Newcastle region in such an exciting growth stage.

OOTS has always been a big supporter of local businesses and the region, and feels perfectly positioned to help businesses seek out opportunities to continue to expand.

After completing a Bachelor of Communication (Journalism and Media) at the University of Newcastle, Leah's career commenced at Channel Nine in Sydney. Being thrown into the fast-paced environment of producing morning TV allowed her to work meticulously and quickly. It taught her to be prepared, and how important a solid team around you is.

Leah says that when she was starting out doubt and imposter syndrome were common challenges she faced, especially being thrown into roles straight out of University. She also was faced with dealing with difficult personalities. Leah says that keeping aligned to her personal morals and values helped her stay true to who she is and guided her in how to react in difficult situations.

Leah would like to see her industry evolve with more inclusive and balanced gender advertising. She says changes are being made but we aren't there yet.

In her role at OOTS, Leah really loves working with clients to build their businesses.

That could be working on their brand, building new elements to showcase the business locally or globally, campaign ideation and execution, and just delivering solid results. OOTS looks after a wide variety of industries and clients so it's always different, and Leah says advertising is just...fun!

Her advice for others starting out on a similar career path is that media and advertising is extremely varied so undertaking work experience will help you understand what area you want to go into. You should also take on opportunities that come your way (Leah nearly turned down work experience at Nine because it scared her, and it became her career), don't be afraid to fail, and be open to learning – every single role Leah has had has taught her something.



### Fiona Nelson

Partner specialising in Property  
Moray & Agnew  
Lawyers

The Newcastle office of Moray & Agnew Lawyers opened almost 20 years ago and has grown to around 130 people including 18 partners. Nationally there are 700 people, with a strong property practice headquartered in Newcastle. Moray & Agnew's expertise and size makes them one of the best resourced property practices in the Hunter region.

After studying science at the University of Sydney, Fiona moved to Canberra and undertook a double degree in Commerce (Banking and Finance) and Laws. In her last year of study she was a paralegal in a national IP firm based in Sydney, before accepting a graduate position with Allen Allen & Hemsley in Sydney. She settled into a property role at Allens before moving to Henry Davis York.

A lifestyle change saw Fiona move to Queensland and take up a commercial property role with Freehills. She spent two years with Freehills before becoming Senior



Legal Counsel then General Counsel at Springfield City Group. Fiona then spent nearly ten years with Springfield, managing all legal aspects of one of Australia's largest private land holding developments before relocating to Newcastle and heading up the Property team at Moray & Agnew Lawyers.

Fiona says that her experience in both private practice and in-house roles has certainly shaped the lawyer she is today. Her practical experience as a client showed the value of providing realistic and commercially-sound advice. In addition, working with entrepreneurial property developers built resilience and a 'find a way' attitude that she now encourages each of her team members to adopt.

The legal industry has evolved considerably over the past 20 years with clients now particularly appreciating the benefits of involving their trusted legal advisers early in their project. Fiona says that they are working more collaboratively with other industry specialists (such as planners, project managers, builders and strata managers) to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved for each client. With changes in legislation creating new challenges, the industry needs to continue to evolve to ensure that all participants can continue to thrive.

Fiona enjoys many aspects of her work. She says that her role is fast-paced and real – she gets to work with developers of exciting projects and see buildings come out of the ground. Fiona has been fortunate to develop strong relationships with a number of key clients and now feels like part of their team – this gives her a real sense of contributing to their business outcomes, which is extremely satisfying.

For others starting out in a similar career path, Fiona advises to be prepared to work hard, to listen and to learn. Often the greatest learning may come from the hardest challenges, but don't be scared to have a go. It's important to be reliable and authentic – it will take time to build your career but if you can connect with people early on, those same people will become valued clients or trusted associates as your career develops.



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## Jo Crosbie named as Personal Assistant of the Year

PKF Sydney and Newcastle has announced their own Jo Crosbie as the Accountant's Daily Women in Finance Awards Executive / Personal Assistant of the Year 2022.

Jo began with PKF back in 2016, taking on the role of managing two of the busiest practitioners at the firm. Since then, she has become the Executive Assistant to the Chair of PKF in Australia, and now works closely with executives and leaders both locally and across the country.

"Leaving the legal industry after 30 years was definitely going to take me out of my comfort zone, but it was certainly a challenge I was ready for," said Jo.

"My time at PKF has presented me with many great opportunities, one being this award win. I couldn't be more honored to have been named the Executive Assistant of the Year 2022 alongside my great team."

Jo's approach is innovative and proactive. If she can't find something she needs, she'll create it. The COVID-19 pandemic and remote working was a challenge for many, and Jo took on the role of ensuring her team could continue to work in what was an "alien" remote working situation. It was Jo who was the calming voice when things weren't going right both for clients, who were watching their businesses stall, and for our team who missed the collaborative environment they were used to.

"Jo knows every client that walks through the door. She knows their children's names, their coffee order, and what makes them tick," said Director, Andrew Beattie.

"I can speak for myself and Steve in saying that the team as a whole would not run the way it does without Jo. Her knowledge, strength, and compassion go a long way in helping our team be the best," said Andrew.

The Women in Finance awards recognise women leading the charge across the finance industry, awarding the best of the best for their outstanding contribution to the profession on a national scale.



## Hunter women winning in business

Women in business throughout the Hunter region has experienced a significant change over the past decade. As gender stereotypes shift, the community has embraced a stance of collaboration and of championing women to become leaders in their industries. As a result, the Hunter region and wider Australia sees more businesses run by women than ever before.

Data from Xero Boss Insights 2021 found that two-thirds of new businesses created in Australia in the past decade have been founded by women. The report also found there has been a 46% increase in women business owners over the past 20 years.

When young female entrepreneurs, leaders and professionals ask local business owner, Holly Martin what her secret to success has been in an industry that was previously largely male orientated, she puts it down to a shift in growth mindset.

Holly has seen the highs and lows of business ownership, having originally started her business ten years ago and called it Just Holly - talk about self-limiting beliefs!

"Like many other female business owners, I was thinking small when I started my marketing agency – in fact it wasn't even an agency as such. I wanted to help locals in small business to succeed in their marketing, but I quickly found out I couldn't do it all and there was a greater demand for the services on offer," Holly said.

Fast-forward to 2022 and her marketing agency, The Marketing GP, celebrated 10 years and the success of doubling their team and client numbers twofold in the space of just two years during challenging COVID times.

Today, they have a team of 18 and a network of clients which amounts to over 50 across Australia and New Zealand in any given week.

"The key thing I have learnt over the years that it pays to start out with a growth mindset, to stay committed and push boundaries," Holly said.

"The line in the sand of what can be achieved is fluid. Women today have more opportunities than ever before and creating avenues for their input as well as pathways to success is vital to ensure women continue to win in business.

"For any business owner – or would-be business owner - I strongly recommend looking at your inner narrative to see whether you are holding yourself back from success. Sometimes we can be our own worst enemies when it comes to taking on a challenge or pushing past expectations."

Holly has created a predominately female-based agency which is based in Carrington, Newcastle. Providing for their community is part of the business ethos, so the team recently collaborated with local coffee roastery, Peaberrys Coffee Roasters to create a unique blend – The NewyWay – which gives back to an important cause in the Hunter.

"We created The NewyWay to celebrate a decade in business and help an important locally-based, but national and international organisation, TROG Cancer Research, to outsmart cancer through life-saving and life-changing cancer trials," Holly said.

You can purchase a bag of The NewyWay by visiting The Marketing GP's website.



## Renewables and gas, not coal, set the price in electricity market

**Tania Constable**  
**Minerals council of Australia**

*Coal's share of electricity generated in Australia has reduced as more renewables such as wind, solar and hydro enter the energy market. As a result, renewable and gas generation set the price in Australia's electricity market.*

Coal is not the problem here and it is misleading to suggest otherwise. Over 85% of all saleable coal mined in Australia was exported in 2021-22.

Australian coal generated \$112.8 billion in export revenue in 2021-22, up 188% on 2020-21, driven by ongoing tight global markets.

At a price cap of \$70 per tonne of coal the government is considering, as reported in the media, most mines dedicated to a power station will not be able to meet the costs of production.

The vast majority of coal production for domestic use is mined at sites dedicated to the domestic power-stations and serviced by dedicated supply infrastructure, such as conveyors from the run-of-mine plant to the power-station fuel stacks. Each generator also has specific needs around coal quality, ash and energy content and trace elements.

Only one power-station in NSW shares coal export infrastructure, with a rail siding enabling delivery of coal from the mine to the power-station using common rail infrastructure.

Pricing of coal for domestic power-stations depends on the commercial relationship between the mine and the power station reflecting the cost of mining and transport. It is supplied under contracts with price, quality and volume conditions with terms measured in years.

It is worth noting that the energy security issues that emerged in early June were as a consequence of mechanical failures in generation taking out almost half the available generation capacity in the market, not a shortage of coal.

Specifically, the electricity price and supply security crisis in June was the result of a shortage of electricity generation when mechanical failures forced more than 10 generator units across Victoria, NSW and Queensland to shut down.

This drove the electricity price escalation in Australia which resulted from a shortage of electricity supply, not a shortage of coal or high international coal prices as a result of the Ukraine-Russia conflict.

## Mining delivers budget lift

*The contribution to the federal budget from mining is extraordinary and highlights once more the importance of mining investment to the Australian economy according to the Minerals Council of Australia.*

In the last 20 years, employment in mining has tripled and wages doubled, benefiting hundreds of thousands of Australians, especially in regional areas.

But the government's plan to fundamentally realign Australia's workplace relations system from enterprise bargaining to multi-employer bargaining will undermine efforts by both the government and the Reserve Bank to stabilise the economy. Multi-employer bargaining will expose mining to levels of industrial disruption and wage inflation not seen since the 1980s.

It is clear from the economic outlook presented by the Treasurer in handing down the budget that the government must embark on the productivity reforms needed to secure the nation's economic future, including attracting a large slice of the \$4 trillion of mining investment required to transform the world to net-zero emissions by 2050.

It is increased productivity that will drive business growth and with the right policies Australian mining can undergo another major expansion in investment.

However, to fully capture the economic potential of this opportunity, government policies must support investment in exploration, mining, minerals processing and mining-related manufacturing.

Measures such as the new programs for funding students at universities and in technical and further education, particularly those in regional Australia, are a good start.

As are government initiatives on critical materials such as funding the new research and development hub and other development programs.

Australia needs policy settings that deliver internationally competitive company taxes, practical and beneficial workplace relations rules, an efficient transformation to net-zero emissions that provides reliable and competitively priced energy, and efficient and effective regulation and approvals processes.

The budget shows the value of the large expansion in mining investment that began in the early 2000s which has provided more than \$143 billion in company taxes over the last decade.

Internationally competitive and stable investment settings are essential to attracting large-scale investment in mining that will ultimately benefit all businesses, workers, and households, and other economies around the world.



## HVCCC recognised as exceptional place to work

*The Hunter Valley Coal Chain Coordinator (HVCCC) has been recognised as an exceptional place to work and the recipient of a Best Workplace Award for 2022 through the 'Voice Project' – HVCCC's partner who administers their employee engagement survey.*

The Voice Project's core purpose is to improve organisations by giving people a voice. Their survey process helps capture the crucial information that informs better decisions and inspires greater ownership and engagement amongst staff. The Best Workplace Awards are presented to organisations that are dedicated to empowering their employees and giving them a voice.

HVCCC says that it knows it is in all our interests and it's everyone's job to nurture an environment where we continually improve our day-to-day experiences at work. Being recognised as an exceptional place to work involves connection to our shared purpose and values, and to the importance of our work.

## NSW mining celebrated

*The world-class NSW mining industry was the focus of NSW Parliament as the NSW Minerals Council Industry & Suppliers Awards Dinner was held for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic.*

The Awards Dinner was attended by over 250 people from the mining industry, the community and more than 20 MPs from across the Parliament, including Premier Dom Perrottet, Deputy Premier Paul Toole and Shadow Minister for Natural Resources Courtney Houssos.

NSW Minerals Council CEO, Stephen Galilee praised the outstanding finalists and all working in mining across NSW who have contributed so much to mining and to our State as we face the long road of economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The last few years have been tough for communities right across NSW. Despite these challenges, our world-class miners have continued to operate safely and responsibly, protecting jobs, supporting local communities and maintaining our contribution to NSW," Mr Galilee said.

"Our Industry and Suppliers' Awards acknowledge our high achievers in mining in NSW and our award winners are critical to the ongoing pursuit of excellence in our industry," Mr Galilee said. Based in Sydney and working with mines across NSW, Nautitech Mining Systems operate under the motto of 'harnessing technology to keep miners safe'. This commitment to safety saw Nautitech named Supplier of the Year for their work with Komatsu, Centennial, and Androck to develop a comprehensive safety solution for shuttle cars in underground mines.

Statutory Electrical Engineer for Glencore and proud mother-of-two, Tristah Allen, was named Young Achiever of the Year. After starting her career as an apprentice electrician in 200, Tristah joined United Wambo Joint Venture as a Electrical Support

Engineer in 2020. In 2022 she was successfully appointed to her current position of Statutory Electrical Engineer, the first female to be appointed as a Statutory Engineer within Glencore Coal Assets.

United Wambo Joint Venture managed by Glencore won NSW Mining Operation of the Year, for implementing outstanding on-ground initiatives to improve company culture, safety, environmental management, productivity and to optimise management of noise and air quality. Small Business of the Year was awarded to SafeGauge, a Hunter based company that develops specialist "smart" tooling that allows workers to maintain heavy machinery safely. SafeGauge launched its first unique-to-market product in July 2020 - the SafeTest PT4 kit: A Bluetooth kit to wirelessly test hydraulic pressure from up to 50m away, enhancing safety and reducing testing time by 80%.

Fiona Robertson, Founding Chair of the Women in Mining Network in NSW and Non-Executive Director Whitehaven Coal was honoured with the Outstanding Contribution to Mining award. Fiona was recognised for her highly successful mining career to date, her commitment to empowering women within the mining industry, and for encouraging more women to see mining as an exciting career path. The winners for 2022 NSW Mining Industry and Supplier Awards were:

NSW Mining Operation of the Year: United Wambo Joint Venture, Glencore

NSW Mining - Supplier of the Year: Nautitech Mining Systems

NSW Mining - Small Business of the Year: SafeGauge

Young Achiever: Tristah Allen - United Wambo Joint Venture, Glencore

Outstanding Contribution to Mining: Fiona Robertson - Non-Executive Director Whitehaven Coal, Founding Chair, Women in Mining Network NSW

**A summary of the details of the winners and finalists can be found at [www.nswminingdinner.com.au/finalists](http://www.nswminingdinner.com.au/finalists)**

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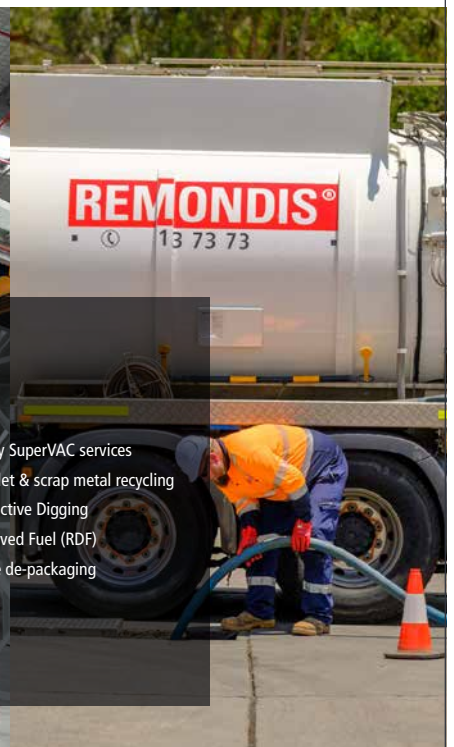
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- Non-Destructive Digging
- Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)
- Food waste de-packaging



## NCIG receives ESG Excellence Directors Award

*The Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group (NCIG) received the 2022 ESG Excellence Directors Award at the recent Foresight Engage conference.*

Foresight is a sustainability-led alternative assets and SME investment manager, who manage more than \$22 billion for some of the world's largest institutional investors, private and high net-worth individuals.

The conference brought portfolio companies together with the objective of enhancing business performance through knowledge sharing and collaboration.

NCIG's CEO, Aaron Johansen, said they were thrilled to be recognised for their commitment to delivering a meaningful sustainability strategy that has the wellbeing of people, environment and operational excellence at its core.

"This award is a recognition of our commitment to optimising sustainable operations. It is a testament to the entire NCIG team and how hard we are all working to achieve our sustainability goals and targets through various programs and initiatives."

NCIG was also invited to talk about its approach to sustainability at the two-day event. NCIG's sustainability team presented key steps on their sustainability journey, including the development of a Sustainability Strategy Framework and its increased transparency over the past two years. They also shared NCIG's recent achievement in gaining first place in its sector in the 2022 GRESB investor benchmark, with overall score of 96/100 and a five-star rating – the highest rating possible.

"Stakeholder interest in understanding ESG and sustainability performance has grown considerably in recent years. It is important to share the right level of transparency to help meet those needs. NCIG welcomes the opportunity to share our experience and insight, in particular of embedding sustainability considerations into our daily operations," Mr Johansen said.

## Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project expanded

*BlueFloat Energy and Energy Estate, the developers of the Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project have announced that they have expanded the size of the Project from 1.4 GW to 1.65 GW and released a visual simulation.*

Located between 20 and 50 kilometres off the Hunter-Central Coast region, the Project will use floating offshore wind technology. The Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project is within the region identified by the Australian Federal Government as one of the six areas to be assessed for suitability for offshore wind developments.

On 30 September 2022, the New South Wales Government released the draft declaration for the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone, which shows the potential Commonwealth offshore wind zone off the NSW coast.

The increase in the capacity of the Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project to 1.65GW is a result of detailed analysis of the investigation area previously announced by the developers and its potential for deployment of floating offshore wind technology.

The expansion factors in the potential size of the Commonwealth offshore wind zone, the region's robust grid capacity and the accelerated retirement of coal fired energy generation in NSW. It also supports the momentum behind investment in renewable energy created by the new Federal Government as demonstrated by the rapid passage of the Climate

Change Bill which enshrines into law emissions reductions of 43% below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

Carlos Martin, CEO of BlueFloat Energy noted "Since we started the development of the Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project in 2020 the need for new, large-scale generation capacity in the HunterCentral Coast region has accelerated - with the retirement date for the existing coal-fired power stations moving forward by decades.

"I was delighted to meet stakeholders in Newcastle earlier this year and understand first-hand the role that offshore wind can play in the clean energy future for the region, supporting existing energy users, replacing thermal generation and powering new industries like green hydrogen exports and clean manufacturing."

THE Visual Simulation for the project (available on the project website - <https://huntercoastowp.com.au>) was produced by Plain Concepts, a worldwide technology pioneer in the use of a 3D graphics development engine that uses physically based renders that create a unique level of realism. The resulting visual simulation allows you to see how the proposed 110 turbines will look like from 10 iconic points along the coast, both during the day and at night.

In June this year the developers released the visual simulation for their Greater Gippsland Offshore Wind Project in Victoria and will release visual simulations for their other sites in Australia and New Zealand in the coming months.

Nick Sankey, Country Manager for the Energy Estate and BlueFloat Energy partnership in Australia, said "We want to be upfront and show coastal communities and users of the sea what our projects will look like.

"For this reason, we have prioritised preparing and releasing accurate visual simulations of our projects.

"The process to create the 3D simulation involves the use of panoramic photographs (taken by a local photographer) from a number of locations, trigonometry, data points and digital technology.

"The output is a realistic and scientifically rigorous visual representation of an offshore wind project."

A visual guide to the methodology used to develop visual simulations is available at <https://youtu.be/1-MabhMM7Ec>.

Rosie King, Director of Partnerships at Energy Estate, commented "Energy Estate is committed to the transformation of the Hunter-Central Coast region into a clean energy powerhouse – from the Upper Hunter to the coast.

"We work closely with local stakeholders and we want the communities' input into the design of our projects. I am personally excited to release the visual simulation for the Hunter Coast Offshore Wind Project.

"Our team carefully chose the points along the coast so that you could view the proposed project from different perspectives.

"Our vision is that by collaborating with local government, industry, communities and other offshore wind proponents we can create a thriving offshore wind manufacturing, construction and service industry in the Hunter-Central Coast region."





# Mining responsibly, for today and tomorrow.

After graduating uni with degrees in business and commerce, Hunter Valley local Leah Miller joined the NSW mining industry. And her job, like so many others in mining in NSW, is to find smarter, safer and more sustainable ways of doing things.

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## Whitehaven Coal opening doors to female workers

*Whitehaven Coal says that it wants to be the Australian mining employer of choice, and to help connect with female talent, and achieve a target of 20% female workforce representation by the end of FY26, they are partnering with the World of Work Program.*

The World of Work Program is a comprehensive career support initiative designed to help women looking to restart or strengthen their career after a break, or even change careers entirely.

Paul Flynn, Whitehaven Coal Managing Director and CEO, says the World of Work partnership helps highlight Whitehaven's clear offering for women looking for a new challenge, and will contribute to attracting the diverse talent Whitehaven requires to thrive.

"By partnering with the World of Work Program we can reach high-calibre females looking for a fresh start, share the many opportunities we have available for women at all stages of their lives, and clear up common misconceptions about mining that may impact a woman's decision to pursue a career in our industry.

"Given the tight talent market, it's more important than ever for us to widely advertise our point of difference as an employer for women so we can continue to build a truly diverse and inclusive workforce," he said.

Balancing work and family commitments can be a reason women choose not to return to the workforce after having children, which is

why they are taking action to support working parents.

To help young families, Whitehaven Coal offers roles to suit a variety of schedules, provide flexibility based on individual circumstances, and has recently launched an industry leading 26 weeks of paid parental leave, in addition to the Australian Government's parental leave scheme.

Anastasia Schutz, a Commercial Superintendent for Whitehaven's Gunnedah Open Cuts, has benefited from Whitehaven's flexible approach.

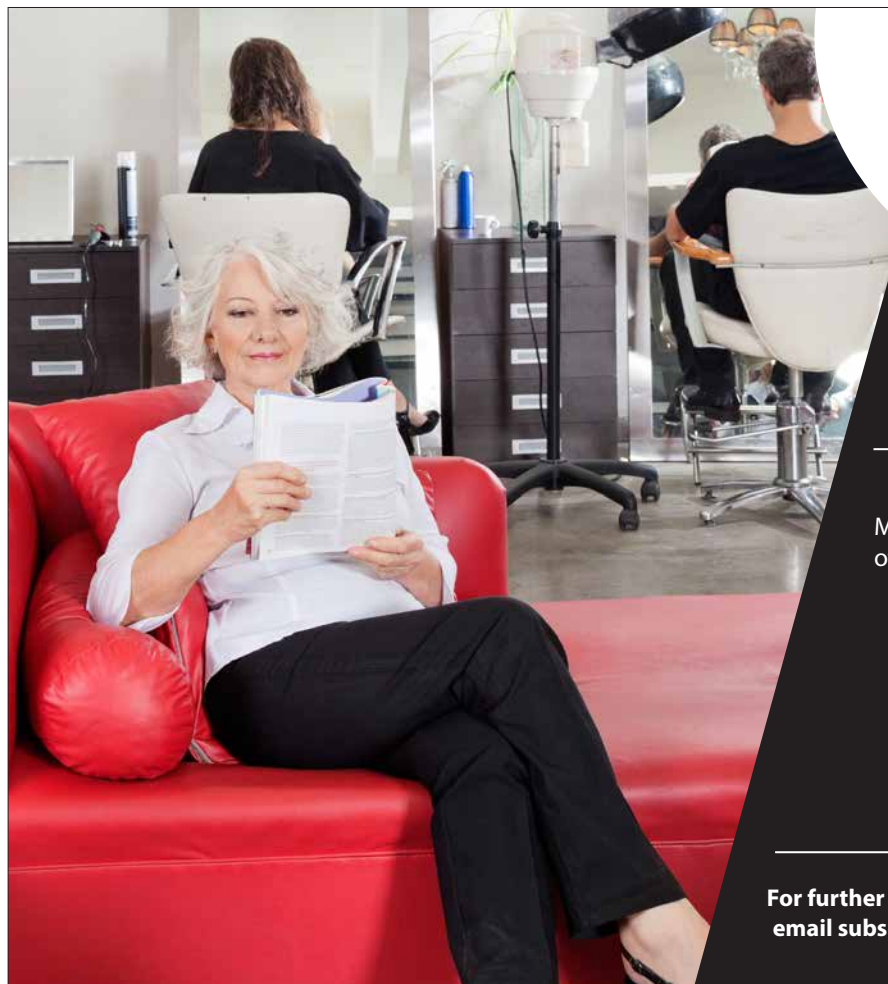
"While on maternity leave after having my first child in January 2021, senior leaders facilitated a role change that has allowed me to stay with the company while reducing travel time and accommodating childcare needs," she said.

Whitehaven Coal also provides in-depth women's leadership development and mentoring programs to empower our female workforce and accelerate their careers.

Their Aboriginal Community Relations Officer, Hollie Sampson, is thankful for Whitehaven's investment in women and has benefited from participating in our Women's Leadership Program.

"I am grateful that Whitehaven recognises the importance of retaining and developing women in our workforce and the valuable contribution women make to our company.

"The Women's Leadership Program has given me a toolkit of strategies to build my confidence, become my authentic self at home and at work and take charge of my own personal development. I have really enjoyed learning more about myself and my own strengths and weaknesses and the science behind it all," she said.



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## “Wind Challenger” vessel Shofu Maru arrives in Newcastle

*The world's first bulk coal carrier vessel equipped with a hard sail, “Wind Challenger”, of Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL) arrived in Newcastle Harbour on 24 October on its maiden voyage.*

PWCS CEO, Hennie du Plooy, with Manager Service Assurance, Steve Rigby, and members of the PWCS team were there to welcome the vessel crew with local and international dignitaries. Pictured here is the Port Waratah team with Hideyuki Irisawa, Managing Director MOL Shipping Australia, and the Shofu Maru vessel crew.

“Congratulations to MOL on achieving a significant milestone as part of their sustainable shipping plans, it is a great privilege to have the Shofu Maru in Newcastle,” said Mr du Plooy.

The Wind Challenger’s innovative giant sail harnesses wind power to supplement its engines, creating a greener energy source for bulk carrier shipping. Port Waratah worked directly with the team at Mitsui to ensure the vessel could safely load at their coal terminals. Find out more at [www.mol-service.com/service/windchallenger](http://www.mol-service.com/service/windchallenger)

**Read more about how Port Waratah is working with supply chain partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other sustainability matters and performance at <https://sustainability.pwcs.com.au/coal-chain>**



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A woman goes to the local psychic in hopes of contacting her dearly departed grandmother. The psychic's eyelids begin fluttering, her voice begins warbling, her hands float up above the table, and she begins moaning. Eventually, a coherent voice emanates, saying, "Granddaughter? Are you there?"

The customer, wide-eyed and on the edge of her seat, responds, "Grandmother? Is that you?"

"Yes granddaughter, it's me."

"It's really, really you, grandmother?", the woman repeats.

"Yes, it's really me, granddaughter."

The woman looks puzzled, "You're sure it's you, grandmother?"

"Yes, granddaughter, I'm sure it's me."

The woman pauses a moment, "Grandmother, I have just one question for you."

"Anything, my child."

"Grandmother, when did you learn to speak English?"

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office.

"Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked 'NO REFILLS'."

Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served. When little Logan received his plate, he started eating right away.

"Logan, wait until we say our prayer," his mother reminded him. "I don't have to," the little boy replied.

"Of course you do," his mother insisted, "we say a prayer before eating at our house."

"That's at our house," Logan explained, "but this is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook."

A woman walked up to an elderly looking man rocking in a chair on his porch.

"I couldn't help noticing how happy you look," she said. "What's your secret for a long, happy life?"

"I smoke three packs of cigarettes a day," he said. "I also drink a case of whiskey a week, eat fatty foods and never exercise."

"That's amazing," the woman said. "How old are you?"

"Thirty-six."

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"It's not what you are that holds you back, it's what you think you are not."

- Denis Waitley

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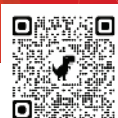
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