

WiRT community to improve appeal of industry

WORDS BY WOMEN IN ROAD TRANSPORT CHAIR, MERYN MORRISON

When I walk into the office every morning I get a cheery “good morning” and a load of cheek from the drivers and store guys, which all helps to make Regal Haulage a great place to work. By 8am the place is filled with a diverse range of people that really make the company an interesting and fun place to be.

As the health and safety compliance manager at Regal Haulage I know first-hand that the trucking industry hosts a great variety of jobs and is a fantastic industry to work in. I firmly believe that starting a conversation around the exciting opportunities available in the sector may entice more young people and women into this industry.

We need to enhance the profile of road transport in New Zealand and there are practical tools we can be implementing so that people feel welcome in the industry and see it as a worthwhile long-term career.

When I look back at my own career and the number of different roles I have had within the industry – management, human resources, and health and safety – it is an example of the opportunities

available. Truck driving is definitely not the only career path in the road transport sector.

I was lucky enough to be raised inside a transport company environment and after a career change from teaching, it seemed logical for me to eventually get into training in the transport industry. From there I have found myself involved with MITO and the Road Transport Forum developing new national qualifications and having a say in the industry’s future.

There is a role for us senior people mentoring young people and I firmly believe women can do anything in this industry; it comes down to support from their organisations, the right attitude, and a willingness to advance in their future development.

It is this outlook that has motivated me to take on the role as chairperson for Women in Road Transport (WiRT) New Zealand. I passionately believe that a change of conversation is needed across the whole industry regarding the participation of women. There are an increasing number of women entering the industry but we still have a long way to go.

From a survey conducted amongst our peers, we found that the overwhelming theme was that our industry hasn’t got a great image and therefore is not an attractive career choice. While specifically targeting more women to enter our industry is not the only answer, it can be a good start.

The reality is that women do require some different work parameters but some of the changes we are advocating men will enjoy too!



Meryn Morrison

Alongside a dedicated board of women from the road transport industry, I am keen to build on what has already been done and regenerate the WiRT community – a community that stands for inclusion, expansion, and support.

Media reports have recently noted the need to get more women into trades, citing the benefits of filling shortages as well as the unique skills that they bring to the job. The road transport sector is no exception. By continuing to build the WiRT community, we can improve the image of the industry and make it one that appeals to all different sorts of people, men and women alike.

WiRT is currently reconnecting with members and updating our database. We welcome people, men or women, who want to be included as members and who wish to be more involved. ■

For further information regarding membership and regional and community events, please email wirtnz@gmail.com

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