



# See you at the conference



**WORDS BY MERYN MORRISON, WIRT CHAIRPERSON**

It's that time of the year again when we all gather for the annual Road Transport Forum Conference, and this time, it's in sunny Dunedin.

While it's called the RTF Conference, the event is for the entire industry, and I encourage all operators to consider taking the time out of their busy schedules to attend. You owe it to yourself and your business to recharge the batteries, network with your colleagues from across the industry, and undertake the professional development opportunity that the conference presents.

Traditionally, as an industry, we have been pretty lackadaisical when it comes to professional development and the opportunities that upskilling presents to management and staff. So, what then can professional development offer you and why should you do it?

Firstly, it can work to re-energise you and your business by inspiring new ideas and introducing new ways of doing things. This is especially true for those in management positions as, after all, those are the people in a leadership role.

Staff will naturally be interested in the ideas management brings back and how they can contribute to making the business more efficient and a better place to work.

You can never underestimate how much senior management can influence other's thoughts and attitudes towards where they work and what they are working towards. An enthusiastic, motivated manager will inevitably attract and inspire staff to follow them and when that is coupled with the implementation of new ideas gained through professional development, staff will feel that they are also learning things that can have a positive impact on their careers.

Attending an event like the RTF Conference also means that operators remain current with what is coming up in our industry, the state of the economy, and what trends they can expect to see over the next 12 months. You also get to rub shoulders with industry heavyweights, suppliers, your associations, as well as politicians and government officials. Inevitably, you will hear about the most

recent innovations in the industry and how they can help you with improving the productivity of your business.

The governing body of Women in Road Transport (WIRT) will also have its main meeting of the year at the conference. It's a good opportunity for those of us from all over the country to touch base with each other, set the direction for what we want to focus on for next year, and discuss some of our shared experiences.

If you are going to the conference, then why don't you look to set up the same thing? Instead of hoping to catch up with someone there, why not contact them, make an appointment, and make the most of your precious time away from your business. It seems only sensible to use the conference as a conduit to extend your businesses profile.

Once again, WIRT is staging an auction at this year's conference and the items we have collected for it are fantastic. Our sponsors have been incredibly generous and we are grateful for their support. Proceeds from the auction go towards funding WIRT's activities and advocacy over the next year. We will also have an exhibition stand at the conference, so please come up and introduce yourself, get a preview for the items up for auction, and hear about what we do and why it is in your interest to encourage and support women to get involved in road transport.

If you haven't already, you can register for the conference at [rtfconference.co.nz](http://rtfconference.co.nz). It should be a great event, and I look forward to seeing you there. ■



**The annual RTF Conference gives an opportunity to network with people from across the industry**