

Sharing your stories



WORDS BY MERYN MORRISON, WIRT CHAIRPERSON

Women in Road Transport is an organisation that is dedicated to its membership and all the women who work in what has traditionally been a male-dominated industry. Over the last few years we have made major strides in not only promoting the industry as a realistic career path for women and young people, but also in helping to highlight some of the incredible women who already work in the industry.

In an industry that incorporates a large degree of machismo, it can be very difficult for women to make their mark. One of the things I want to do is help get some of our inspiring women to tell us about their experiences in the industry. Late last year I asked a bunch of WIRT members to share with me their thoughts and stories of what it means to them to work driving trucks in New Zealand. This is a brief snapshot of some of those.

Kerry Crosby, KPH Transport

At nearly 55 years old with three children, and after 37 years as a hairdresser as well as time as a weekend level 4 caregiver, the timing was finally right for me to follow my dream to drive trucks. My daughter Elizabeth had already followed her dream and holds a class 5 licence. She gave me the confidence to get out there and do it as I'd always taken the opportunity to travel as a passenger with friends over the years and really enjoyed it.

I set about obtaining my licence and currently have a class 4. I'm presently studying for my class 5.

KPH transport gave me an opportunity, for which I'm very grateful. I've been with the company for only a few weeks and I can already tell it's one of the best decisions I've made. I've been getting experience in the class 2 truck as the seasonal berry driver and I'm loving being out and about. I look forward to being provided with a class 4 truck.

Many friends have offered so much advice and support and I'm humbled at the positivity I've been shown.

“The timing was finally right to follow my dream to drive trucks”



Krystal Whitter, tow-truck driver

I'm 24 and am a tow-truck driver in and around Tauranga. I first moved here from Taranaki two years ago really wanting to change my life up. I've always had a passion for cars and driving so I studied and graduated with a Level 3 Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (HVO) and decided being a towie sounded like a bit of me!

Eighteen months later and I'm still a towie, even though I have my other licences and endorsements. I deal with so many different people in different situations and always try to make customers feel better if I can. I'll never get sick of seeing the shock on people's faces when they see a female towie jump out of the truck!

Elizabeth Crosy-Campbell, Tomoana Warehousing Ltd

I got interested in trucks quite a few years ago and went on and completed my class 5 licence in 2018. I am now driving a skele for Tomoana Warehousing Ltd carting containers and I'm loving it. Still need to have my hair, nails and make up done before going to work though!



Toni Tawhara, Talley's Group

I'm a class 5 driver who went from doing beauty therapy to driving trucks. I drive mostly the top of the South Island and I LOVE my job and the great people at Talley's that I work with!

There were heaps of others and I'm sorry I can't include them all but your stories have definitely inspired us at WIRT to keep pushing for you.

Finally, I want to give a bit of a plug to Radio New Zealand and the Nights show with Bryan Crump for the excellent wee series profiling the music our magnificent truck drivers listen to in the cab. I particularly enjoyed the recent episode with GJ Sheldrake Ltd driver and 2019 EROAD Young Driver of the Year Summer Ratima Thompson. Summer is an absolute star and such a great example of the enthusiasm that some of our young drivers have for the industry. You can listen to Summer's episode at <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/nights/audio/2018732581/one-for-the-road>.



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