



WiRT to establish governance group

WORDS BY WOMEN IN ROAD TRANSPORT CHAIR, MERYN MORRISON



Meryn Morrison

The Women in Road Transport initiative (WiRT), while still in its infancy, has already exceeded the expectations of many. The proliferation of WiRT principles throughout the industry is ever expanding and is beginning to improve the perception of the industry in many ways. That is a good thing for the ongoing sustainability of road transport in New Zealand, especially as we face significant workforce recruitment challenges and strive to improve labour conditions.

The Women in Road Transport Oversight Group set the initiative's original strategic direction and developed resources to help enable that. As WiRT has grown and progressed, we have had to adapt accordingly. Growth and expectations have exceeded the ability of the Oversight Group to respond and support the network sufficiently. The WiRT structure must therefore evolve to meet this new demand.

Other WiRT leaders and I intend to set up a formal governance group to succeed the Oversight Group. This new group will be designed to provide guidance and direction to local, regional, and national road transport associations, interested organisations, and networks. I believe the group should be made up of nominated well-informed individuals and predicated on the ongoing and sustained support of the Road Transport Forum and its member associations. Commitment from these associations will be essential.

Our thinking is that the governance group should consist of five members, with at least one representative from each of

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the three Road Transport Forum (RTF) member associations, National Road Carriers, Road Transport Association NZ, and NZ Trucking Association. Other criteria would include:

- Each nominee to be endorsed by at least one RTF member association
- Nominees would not have to be members of an RTF member association, however, it is preferred that nominees are road freight transport industry advocates/ participants
- The group would be able to co-opt up to two additional members
- All nominations would be lodged with the RTF national office, which serves as secretariat to WiRT
- The process to determine the membership of the group would be concluded by 31 March each year
- The group's Chair would be determined by the group on an annual basis
- Governance group members may be of any gender

In the event of nominations exceeding positions available, the membership of the group shall be determined by the RTF

Board of Directors in accordance with the above requirements

Part of the ongoing commitment from member associations would involve nominating representatives to undertake regional activities that incorporate WiRT Action Plan initiatives.

Nominees would be suitably energetic people displaying support for women in the industry along with fostering diversity with the view to adding depth to our workforce and represent road transport as a positive, dynamic career choice.

This is an exciting time for WiRT, and I am sure that we will have no shortage of enthusiastic individuals to help guide and progress the WiRT programme through its next phase.

An announcement will be made within the next couple of months formally setting out the selection process and calling for nominations. WiRT leadership is keen to make sure we have comprehensive industry support for this initiative. I will keep Deals on Wheels readers up-to-date on the progress.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate Deborah O'Brien for her appointment as Region 3's representative on the Road Transport Forum Board. Women are woefully under-represented on the industry boards nationally and up until Deborah's appointment, RTF's Board was made up entirely of men.

Deborah is replacing John Anderson, so has big boots to fill, however, I am sure she will do a great job, and I look forward to other outstanding women in our industry putting their hands up to fill leadership positions in the future. ■

