

**LANCE HOCKRIDGE  
MD & CEO Aurizon**

**ISRAEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - 23 JULY 2014**

FOUR YEARS AGO, THE THEN QR LEFT GOVERNMENT AFTER ALMOST 150 YEARS.

IT WAS AN AMICABLE PARTING AND A RELATIVELY SMOOTH TRANSITION TO PUBLIC LISTING.

WE OWED THIS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNT OF BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK.

CULTURALLY AND COMMERCIALY, IT HAS BEEN VERY LIBERATING.

REFORMS REMAIN A WORK IN PROGRESS BUT MUCH HEAVY-LIFTING HAS BEEN DONE AND SUBSTANTIAL VALUE CREATED FOR SHAREHOLDERS. FOR EXAMPLE:

- PROFITS, MEASURED BY UNDERLYING EBIT, ROSE FROM \$272 MILLION IN FY 10 TO \$754 MILLION IN FY13;
- TOTAL TONNAGES HAVE INCREASED MORE THAN 15% SINCE IPO WHILE EMPLOYEE NUMBERS HAVE DROPPED MORE THAN 20 % - A CLEAR MEASURE OF INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY; AND
- THE SHARE PRICE FROM IPO TO 30 JUNE THIS YEAR HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED.

WE HAVE TRANSFORMED, REBUILT AND RE-SHAPED, AND HAVE A STRONGER FOCUS ON OUR CUSTOMERS.

BUT IN MY VIEW, THE BIGGEST CHANGE IN THOSE FOUR YEARS HAS BEEN IN IDENTITY AND PURPOSE.

WE SIGNALLED EARLY TO THE MARKET THAT WE WERE A GROWTH STOCK, AND COMMITTED TO DOUBLING THE VALUE OF THE COMPANY EVERY FIVE YEARS.

WE MEANT IT. EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE, INCLUDING THE RECENTLY-ANNOUNCED PARTNERSHIP WITH CHINA'S BAOSTEEL, EXEMPLIFIES THAT AMBITION.

AURIZON IS UNASHAMEDLY FOCUSED ON A CLEAR IMAGE OF OUR FUTURE.

WHILE THE FUNDAMENTALS ASSOCIATED WITH CONTINUING TO TRANSFORM THE EXISTING BUSINESS REMAIN PARAMOUNT, SO TOO THE CHANCE TO PURSUE WORLD CLASS OUTCOMES FOR OUR CUSTOMERS, OWNERS, EMPLOYEES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH BUILDING ON THE CAPABILITY ALREADY DEMONSTRATED IN OUR COMPANY.

TODAY WHILE I'LL BRIEFLY REFLECT ON THE JOURNEY SINCE IPO, I WILL CONCENTRATE ON FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY FOUR YEARS' HARD WORK.

AT AURIZON, WE SEE OURSELVES BUILDING A BUSINESS FOR 2025 AND BEYOND.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM IS TO SET UP THE COMPANY FOR A LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. FOR THIS, WE NEED TO EMBED A CULTURE OF ENERGY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GROWTH.

ABSOLUTELY, WE NEED TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE, WHICH IS OUR TICKET TO THE GAME. BUT VISION AND COURAGE IS GOING TO SET US APART AND CREATE GENUINE VALUE.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT, FOR INSTANCE IN PRE- PRIVATISATION DAYS, THAT THE LUMBERING QR WOULD NOW BE CONTEMPLATING A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR GREENFIELD RAIL AND PORT DEVELOPMENT FOR IRON ORE IN THE PILBARA? AND IN A JOINT VENTURE WITH BAOSTEEL, ONE OF THE GLOBE'S LARGEST STEEL COMPANIES.

OR A SIMILARLY LARGE PROPOSAL IN QUEENSLAND'S EMERGING GALILEE BASIN, WITH ANOTHER END-CUSTOMER, THE INDIA GIANT GVK

HOW DIFFERENT DOES THIS SOUND TO THE COMPANY AT THE TIME OF IPO WHEN WE WERE COMMITTED TO DOING EVERYTHING 100 % OURSELVES, WITH A NARROW MINDSET AROUND FUNDING AND NO GLOBAL CONTEXT?

WE'RE WORKING HARD TO SHAPE NEW AND INNOVATIVE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS, WHERE FOR EXAMPLE WE SHARE RISK TO ENHANCE VIABILITY OF PROJECTS, AND WHERE WE LOOK TO CREATIVE FUNDING SOLUTIONS.

SOME HAVE VENTURED THAT WE'RE OVER-REACHING IN UNCHARTERED TERRITORY - AUDACIOUS, OVERLY-AMBITIOUS PLANS IN AN UNCERTAIN MARKET.

THEY QUESTION A TRADITIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY BUILDING PORTS; ENTERING THE BIG GAME IN THE PILBARA; AND, CONTRACTING DIRECTLY WITH INTERNATIONAL END-CUSTOMERS.

DO WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE, SOME HAVE SAID, IN RUNNING TRAINS FOR MINERS, FARMERS AND FACTORIES.

IS THIS A THREAT? A CHALLENGE? AN OPPORTUNITY?

OUR COMPANY I WOULD CONTEND, LIKE OUR NATION, IS AT AN IMPORTANT INFLEXION POINT.

WITHOUT AMBITION AND SOME "OUT OF THE BOX THINKING", WE'D BE CONSIGNING OURSELVES TO LIMITED GROWTH, AND LIMITED VALUE-ADD FOR CUSTOMERS AND SHAREHOLDERS.

IN BUSINESS GENERALLY, DO WE WANT TO SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE AUSTRALIA'S ENVIABLE STANDARD OF LIVING THROUGH GROWTH AND INNOVATION; OR HAVE COMPLACENCY DRIVE DOWN FURTHER OUR DECLINING INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS?

WE ALL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN FROM ISRAEL.

ISRAEL'S FIRST PRESIDENT, DAVID BEN-GURION FAMOUSLY SAID: "ALL THE EXPERTS ARE EXPERTS ON WHAT WAS. THERE IS NO EXPERT ON WHAT WILL BE."

ISRAEL HAS MOVED INTO THAT GAP, AND SPECIALISES IN IMAGINING THE FUTURE, AND DARING TO DREAM. AND JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, ONCE ISRAELI COMPANIES CONCEIVE THE FUTURE, THEY THEN MAKE IT HAPPEN.

COUNTRIES AND COMPANIES HAVE TO BE IN THE VISION BUSINESS TO SURVIVE IN THE LONG-TERM.

OVER RECENT DECADES, AURIZON LIKE AUSTRALIA HAS RELIED ON AUSTRALIAN RESOURCE GROWTH – AND PREMIUM PRICES - FOR MUCH OF ITS SUCCESS. IT WAS A 'MAGIC PUDDING' MENTALITY WHERE AUSTRALIA WAS THE NEVER-ENDING QUARRY FOR THE WORLD.

IN THE 1960S, JAPANESE INVESTMENT OPENED UP QUEENSLAND'S BOWEN BASIN. WITHIN TWO DECADES, QR WAS RAILING 50 MILLION TONNES OF COAL, THEN DOUBLING THAT AGAIN IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS. FIFTY YEARS ON, AURIZON NOW MOVES MORE THAN 200 MILLION TONNES OF EXPORT COAL OVER OUR TRACK.

JAPAN REMAINS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST EXPORT MARKET FOR COAL ALTHOUGH THE LANDSCAPE IS RAPIDLY CHANGING, WITH CHINA AND INDIA BECOMING THE HIGH-GROWTH DESTINATIONS.

AURIZON IS 70 % LEVERAGED TO THE RESOURCE SECTOR, SO IT'S UNSURPRISING THAT OUR JOURNEY IS ANALOGOUS TO AUSTRALIA'S CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE HIGH-POWERED ASIAN ECONOMIES.

AND TO STEAL A PHRASE FROM TONY ABBOTT “YOU DO NOT WIN NEW FRIENDS BY LOSING OLD ONES.”

IN THE 2013 FINANCIAL YEAR AURIZON TRANSPORTED MORE THAN 60 MILLION TONNES OF COAL AND IRON ORE DESTINED FOR CHINA. THIS TONNAGE HAD MORE THAN DOUBLED IN TWO YEARS.

THE SHARP INCREASE IS NOT ONLY EMBLEMATIC OF DEEPENING TRADE OPPORTUNITIES, BUT ALSO OF AN EVOLVING STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT FOR AURIZON IN THE VALUE CHAIN FOR AUSTRALIAN RESOURCES.

WE ARE AGGRESSIVELY EXPLORING THE WAYS IN WHICH OUR COMPANY CAN BE AN ENABLER FOR WORLD-CLASS EXPORT INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND JOINT VENTURES, WHICH ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET FOR GLOBAL CAPITAL.

THIS IS THE TYPE OF LONG-LIFE AND PRODUCTIVE EXPORT INFRASTRUCTURE THAT AUSTRALIA NEEDS. INVESTMENT THAT CAPITALISES ON ABUNDANT RESOURCES, DRIVES EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC WEALTH, AND CREATES DEEPER, LASTING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND ASIAN TRADING PARTNERS.

AURIZON HAS A STRONG GLOBAL OUTLOOK AND TREASURES OUR LONG-HELD RELATIONSHIPS IN THE END MARKETS OF JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, CHINA AND INDIA. THIS HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FOCUS FOR ME AS CEO, AND KEY MEMBERS OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT.

WE ALSO HAVE A DEEP RELATIONSHIP NETWORK IN NORTH AMERICA, WHERE WE BENCHMARK WITH SOME OF THE WORLD’S MOST EFFICIENT RAILROADS. OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM INCLUDES TWO NORTH AMERICAN RAILROADERS, AND A BRAZILIAN WHO RAN THE GLOBAL COAL BUSINESS FOR VALE, ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST MINERS.

TO ILLUSTRATE THE STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY FOR COMPANIES LIKE AURIZON, I’LL OUTLINE THE KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR RESPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH BAOSTEEL AND GVK.

IN MAY THIS YEAR, BAOSTEEL AND AURIZON LAUNCHED A JOINT OFF-MARKET BID TO ACQUIRE AQUILA RESOURCES. THAT \$1.4 BILLION BID IS NOW BEING FINALISED, WITH BAOSTEEL AND AURIZON TAKING EFFECTIVE CONTROL JUST OVER A WEEK AGO.

THE CO-INVESTMENT MODEL BRINGS TOGETHER SCALE, COMMERCIAL STRENGTH, AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND LOGISTICS EXPERTISE.

IT ALSO SHOWS A MATURING EVOLUTION IN CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIAN RESOURCES, WHERE IT IS PARTNERING WITH LOCAL COMPANIES AND ENTRUSTING LOCAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS WITH ON-THE-GROUND PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY.

BAOSTEEL, AS ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST IRON AND STEEL PRODUCERS, NEEDS A RELIABLE, LOW-RISK SUPPLY OF QUALITY RESOURCES. IT ALSO BRINGS TO THE TRANSACTION HIGHLY-COMPETITIVE FUNDING AND MARKET ACCESS TO LOWER-COST MINING, RAIL AND PORT-RELATED EQUIPMENT.

AURIZON BRINGS LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND CAPABILITY TO ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AND MITIGATE RISK. WE’VE EARNED A REPUTATION FOR DELIVERING LARGE-SCALE RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE ON TIME AND ON BUDGET; AND HAVE THE EXECUTION CAPABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE AUSTRALIAN REGULATORY AND CONSTRUCTION RISK.

OUR COMPANIES ARE AIMING TO CREATE A WORLD-CLASS MULTI-USER SUPPLY CHAIN FOR A GREENFIELD IRON ORE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WEST PILBARA, AS WELL AS DELIVER METALLURGICAL COAL RESOURCES HERE IN QUEENSLAND.

THE OTHER PARTIES IN THIS WEST PILBARA VENTURE ARE AMCI, ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING, PRIVATELY-OWNED NATURAL RESOURCES COMPANIES, AND POSCO OF KOREA, ANOTHER OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST STEELMAKERS.

COLLECTIVELY, THIS BRINGS GLOBAL SCALE AND CREDIBILITY TO WHAT HAS ALL THE HALLMARKS OF A GENUINE NATION-BUILDING PROJECT FOR AUSTRALIA.

CONSIDER A NEW IRON ORE PORT WITH POTENTIAL CAPACITY FOR UP TO 350 MILLION TONNES PER ANNUM. AND A 420 KILOMETRE GREENFIELD RAILWAY TAPPING INTO MULTIPLE DEPOSITS NOT ONLY FOR BAOSTEEL, POSCO AND AMCI, BUT ALSO A MYRIAD OF MID-TIER MINERS WITH HIGH-QUALITY BUT CURRENTLY STRANDED DEPOSITS.

OUR WORK WITH GVK-HANCOCK WAS ALSO BORN OUT OF A DESIRE TO CREATE A NEW VALUE PROPOSITION IN QUEENSLAND'S GALILEE BASIN.

THE GALILEE CONTAINS MASSIVE AND RICH THERMAL COAL RESERVES OF MORE THAN SIX BILLION TONNES OVER AN AREA THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF TASMANIA. THESE MEGA-MINES WOULD EACH PRODUCE UP TO 60 MILLION TONNES EACH YEAR.

QUALITY RESERVES WHICH HAVE THUS FAR REMAINED UNDEVELOPED BECAUSE OF A LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND DISTANCE TO MARKET, AND OF COURSE, MARKET CONDITIONS. I WILL SPEAK TO THE MARKET ENVIRONMENT SOON.

OUR PROPOSAL WITH GVK-HANCOCK IS TO TAKE MAJORITY OWNERSHIP OF THE RAIL AND PORT INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER DEVELOPMENT INTO THE ABBOT POINT COAL TERMINAL.

AGAIN IT WOULD BE A MULTI-USER CORRIDOR TO ENABLE US TO ACHIEVE THE ECONOMIES OF SCALE REQUIRED FOR A COMMERCIAL SOLUTION, WITH A BASELOAD DEMAND FROM GVK.

FURTHERMORE, IT WILL BE AN EFFICIENT HYBRID INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTION USING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY WHERE A GREENFIELD RAIL LINK WOULD JOIN THE EXISTING CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COAL NETWORK. BY LEVERAGING THE EXISTING ASSET WE ESTIMATE IT REDUCES THE UPFRONT CAPITAL COST BY MORE THAN \$1 BILLION.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW EXPORT TERMINAL AT ABBOTT POINT WILL BE EXECUTED IN A SUSTAINABLE, ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE MANNER TO BALANCE THOSE ISSUES AGAINST THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A NEW EXPORT OUTLET FOR AUSTRALIA'S CRITICAL NORTH BOWEN BASIN AS WELL AS GALILEE COAL TONNES.

WITH BOTH OF THESE PROPOSALS, AURIZON HAS WORKED HARD ON A COMMERCIAL MODEL THAT MEETS THE NEED OF OUR JOINT VENTURE PARTNERS, AS WELL AS CREATING VALUE FOR OUR COMPANY AND OUR SHAREHOLDERS.

THEIR RESPECTIVE DEMAND PROFILES UNDERPIN LONG-TERM, SECURE AND STABLE LOGISTICS REQUIREMENTS. WE ARE NOT AT THE MERCY OF COMMODITY TRADING CYCLES BUT RATHER LONG-TERM RATES OF ASIAN INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANISATION.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST LEARNINGS FROM OUR WORK WITH BAOSTEEL AND GVK-HANCOCK HOWEVER IS THE NEED TO EXPLICITLY INVEST TIME TO UNDERSTAND THEIR BUSINESS AND THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS THAT WILL UNDERPIN COLLECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES.

THERE NEEDS TO BE AN ALIGNMENT OF VALUES AND COMMERCIAL GOALS; MUTUAL TRUST AND CO-OPERATION; AND STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AT A PERSONAL AND AN ENTERPRISE LEVEL. ACHIEVING THESE THINGS WILL BRING IMMENSE VALUE TO THE TRANSACTION.

LET ME TURN TO THE GLOBAL MARKET ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS A FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT PLACE THAN IT WAS BUT JUST A FEW YEARS AGO.

GROWTH HAS SLOWED BUT IT'S CERTAINLY NOT ZERO GROWTH.

AND AUSTRALIA REMAINS ON THE DOORSTEP OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, FOR EXAMPLE, IS FORECASTING THAT THE ASIAN SHARE OF WORLD OUTPUT MAY RISE TO 50% BY 2050.

SO DESPITE SLOWER GROWTH AND LOWER COMMODITY PRICES, I REMAIN UPBEAT ABOUT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR OUR RESOURCES.

THE “CHICKEN LITTLE” VIEW OF RESOURCE DEMAND DOES NOT RECOGNISE THE REALITY OF THE LONG-TERM DYNAMICS IN CHINA, INDIA AND OTHER ASIAN ECONOMIES.

THE INEXORABLE PACE OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANISATION WILL CONTINUE TO DRIVE MULTI-SECTOR GROWTH, TEMPERING AT VARIOUS POINTS BUT ALWAYS KEEPING TO THE FUNDAMENTALS OF NEED, DEMAND AND GROWTH.

I’VE OFTEN CITED THE PROPOSITION THAT IF CHINA’S ECONOMY WERE TO GROW 7% PER ANNUM, THEN BY 2022 IT WILL HAVE DOUBLED IN SIZE COMPARED WITH 2012.

IMPORTS ARE PLAYING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN MEETING CHINA’S OVERALL MINERAL AND ENERGY DEMANDS. AUSTRALIA IS WELL POSITIONED GIVEN THE PREMIUM QUALITY OF OUR COAL AND IRON ORE, CHINA’S ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND THE PROXIMITY TO AUSTRALIA.

EVEN AT CONSERVATIVE GROWTH OF 5%, CHINESE STEEL PRODUCTION GENERATES 30 MILLION TONNES OF ADDITIONAL METALLURGICAL COAL DEMAND PER YEAR AND 55MT OF ADDITIONAL IRON ORE DEMAND.

THE SAME CONSERVATIVE GROWTH OF 5% IN CHINESE THERMAL COAL-FIRED POWER GENERATION CREATES AN ADDITIONAL 100 MILLION TONNES OF THERMAL COAL DEMAND.

AND DESPITE EMERGENCE OF RENEWABLES, COAL WILL REMAIN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE SOURCE OF ENERGY FOR DECADES TO COME AND WILL PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN LIFTING LIVING STANDARDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY ADDRESSING THE CRITICAL ISSUE OF “ENERGY POVERTY”.

LET ME CHANGE GEAR A LITTLE AND BRIEFLY RETURN TO WHERE I STARTED - WITH CULTURAL CHANGE.

WHILE WE RECOGNISE THAT OPERATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL REFORM IS A WORK IN PROGRESS; EQUALLY WE KNOW THAT A VIBRANT, ENGAGED EMPLOYEE CULTURE IS CRITICAL TO OUR FUTURE.

THERE IS CLEARLY NO OVERNIGHT FIX TO CREATING THE RIGHT WORK ENVIRONMENT - A BALANCED, CREATIVE AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE THAT WILL DRIVE PERFORMANCE WITH NEW INSIGHTS AND NEW APPROACHES.

I’D LIKEN THE CHALLENGES IN THIS SPACE TO THOSE WE FACED IN SAFETY WHEN I CAME TO THIS COMPANY. IN BLUNT TERMS THE INJURY LEVEL WAS SIMPLY UNACCEPTABLE, AND IN MY VIEW NO COMPANY SHOULD ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE WITHOUT FIRST DEMONSTRATING EXCELLENCE IN SAFETY PERFORMANCE.

WE CALLED OUT THE PROBLEM WITH AN INTERVENTIONIST PROGRAM THAT ENTAILED YEARS OF HARD YAKKA AND LEADERSHIP. WE DIDN’T TREAT IT LIKE ANY OTHER PROBLEM BUT RATHER INTERVENED AT EVERY LEVEL, AND INVESTED IN THE SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

THE RESULT HAS BEEN A REMARKABLE AND FUNDAMENTALLY NECESSARY IMPROVEMENT IN SAFETY PERFORMANCE, WITH LOST TIME INJURY RATES AND OTHER KPI’S NOW AT WORLD CLASS LEVELS.

INITIALLY THERE WAS EMPLOYEE RESISTANCE BUT NOW EMPLOYEES GENUINELY ACCEPT ZERO HARM IS POSSIBLE AND ABSOLUTELY THE RIGHT TARGET TO HAVE. THEY HAVE MOVED ALONG THE CULTURAL CURVE, NO LONGER DRIVEN BY RULES AND PROCESS BUT OWNING SAFETY AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR WORKMATES.

LIKEWISE, WE RECOGNISE THAT IN ORDER TO BE A WORLD LEADING TRANSPORT BUSINESS – AND TO DRAW ON THE BEST TALENT AND TO MAKE THE HIGHEST QUALITY DECISIONS - WE NEED TO HAVE A BALANCED AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE.

THE DIVERSITY CHALLENGE IS SYNONYMOUS WITH THE SAFETY CHALLENGE. IF WE DIDN'T SET AUDACIOUS, AMBITIOUS SAFETY GOALS WE WOULD NEVER HAVE REACHED THEM. AND IF WE TREAT INEQUALITY EQUALLY, THEN WE WILL GET WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS GOT.

DIVERSE TEAMS OPERATE MORE EFFECTIVELY AND ARE MORE ENGAGED. THEY ALSO CREATE NEW IDEAS, NEW INSIGHTS AND NEW APPROACHES. THIS INCLUDES GENDER DIVERSITY, AS WELL AS DIFFERENCES IN AGE, LANGUAGE, ETHNICITY, CULTURAL BACKGROUND, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

RESEARCH IN THIS FIELD CONFIRMS THAT THERE ARE SOLID, COMMERCIAL REASONS WHY HAVING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE MAKES SOUND BUSINESS SENSE. IT IS SO MUCH MORE THAN 'THE RIGHT THING TO DO'.

CURRENTLY, THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN OUR TRADITIONAL MALE WORKFORCE IS JUST 13%. MY ASPIRATIONAL TARGET IS THAT WE'LL PUSH THAT TO 30% WOMEN WITHIN FIVE YEARS.

A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL PROGRAM IS NOW UNDERWAY AND BEING SUPPORTED AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE COMPANY. WE'VE ADMITTEDLY GOT A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT WE CANNOT BE THE TYPE OF COMPANY I'VE BEEN ESPOUSING WITHOUT GENUINE CULTURAL CHANGES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, A COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH MEANS YOU NEVER SETTLE FOR WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE.

IT MEANS YOU ARE ALWAYS LOOKING TO CREATE NEW VALUE FOR YOUR SHAREHOLDERS AND EMPLOYEES, AND ALWAYS LOOKING TO DEEPEN CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS.

IT STOPS YOU BECOMING COMPLACENT, BLINKERED, AND ENTITLED – THE ISSUES THAT AUSTRALIA AS A WHOLE NEEDS TO GUARD AGAINST, NOW MORE THAN EVER.

THOSE THINGS WERE SO ELOQUENTLY ARTICULATED BY AUSTRALIAN WRITER, DONALD HORNE IN "THE LUCKY COUNTRY" PUBLISHED 50 YEARS AGO THIS YEAR. HE LAMENTED ON TREATING OUR COUNTRY MERELY AS A FARM AND A QUARRY, WITH LITTLE DEPTH, SOPHISTICATION OR VALUE-ADD.

UNLIKE ISRAEL, AUSTRALIA HAS A CHOICE ABOUT COMPLACENCY. WILL WE COURAGEOUSLY FACE THE KIND OF PARADIGM SHIFT THAT HAS COME WITH THE AURIZON IPO? OR CONTINUE TO RESIST RADICAL INTERVENTION IN THE HOPE THAT OTHER ECONOMIES WILL AGAIN RESCUE US?

THAT THEN AT AURIZON IS OUR CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY. NOT TO BE REALLY GOOD AT WHO AND WHAT WE ARE, BUT TRULY EXCELLENT AT CAPTURING ALL THAT WE CAN BE.

THANK YOU.