

# We impress Mark

THE dedicated attitude of staff throughout CALM was one of the first impressions that struck Mark Neilson when he took up his position recently as the new Manager Financial Services.

Mark is responsible for the restructured Finance, Engineering Services, Financial Systems and Applications groups, which form part of John Byrne's Corporate Services Division.

Based at Como, Mark says he is "getting out of the glass tower as much as possible to meet staff and management to find out more about their financial management requirements.

"I think we have good systems and good people in the financial area, and while I've heard a few people comment adversely on the ORACLE system, I think the system is a good starting point," Mark said.

"Other departments are only now switching away from the old government accounting system (GAS), and many of the bigger departments are choosing ORACLE—the system we put in four years ago.

"So we have a good head start, but we need to fine-tune the way we are using the system, especially with the implementation of accrual accounting—a major project that we've now started in earnest.

"Based on the results of a customer survey that we sent out in July, we are now framing our priorities for the next year.

"Initial results show that staff throughout CALM want more training in the use of systems and the internal controls that we must follow.

"The survey also showed that our over-riding priority should be to



Story and photo  
by Verna Costello

give a high level of professional service to our customers in CALM—to executive staff, managers, and their support staff.

"We'll be placing more emphasis on helping all managers with their reporting requirements.

"We will be informing the executive on a monthly basis how each cost centre and each program's financial performance measures up against the budget; we're in the process of developing a new monthly report for the Executive Committee to do this.

"As a service branch, our aim is to enhance the way that CALM's annual budgeting process works.

"We're also looking to implement a more recent version of the ORACLE financial system to take advantage of improvements in the

way the system works.

Mark comes to CALM with a well-qualified and impressive accounting background in both the public and private sectors, which includes four years with Western Mining, four years with SECWA and three years with the City of Stirling.

He is a full member of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants and is currently working part-time towards a Master of Accounting at the University of Western Australia.

Married to Gina, who has just finished a Ph.D. in English Literature, their weekends are taken up full time with developing a small vineyard in Gidgegannup, just north of Midland.

"I'm enjoying my work enormously, and am pleased to be working for an organisation like CALM, which makes such a positive contribution in the community."

