

New Principal Personnel Officer

HUMAN Resources Branch has a new principal personnel officer—Michelle Bolitho—who says she is delighted to be working with CALM, where she is particularly impressed with the warmth of the welcome she has been given.

"I think I'm reaping the benefits of the goodwill and respect built up for this role by my predecessor Erica Scott, and that is something I will certainly be seeking to maintain and build upon," she said.

"I'm very keen to establish strong relationships with staff and I'll be seeking to get out and meet as many as possible in the not too distant future.

"My aim is to get firsthand knowledge of the human resources issues they face, and how we might improve our service delivery to better meet their needs.

Learning about CALM

"This will serve the additional purpose of helping me learn more about the highly diverse and fascinating areas that CALM is involved in."

Michelle comes to

CALM after seven years at the Department of Contract and Management Services (formerly the Building Management Authority).

During her time at CAMS, Michelle carried out a number of roles across almost the entire human resource function, her first role being as the senior industrial officer, which is the field in which her formal qualifications lie (she has a Masters degree in Industrial Relations from UWA).

Baptism of fire

Michelle describes the position as 'a real baptism of fire' as it was during the days of heavy industrial disputation in the building industry.

"The Construction and Maintenance divisions of the organisation were frequently caught up in these disputes, resulting in some very torrid times not to mention frequent late night sessions in the Industrial Commission," she said.

Having survived a couple of years of this, Michelle had a short stint as the acting manager of Occupational Health and Safety, before moving into a more general human resource

consultancy role.

This position involved both a line management function as team leader of the people delivering personnel services, as well as a large strategic component in working closely with senior management to develop and implement human resource policies and strategies across the organisation.

"Most people would be aware that CAMS has been in a state of continual restructuring and downsizing for quite a number of years and quite a bit of my time was spent in actually facilitating the smooth implementation of the various change processes," Michelle said.

"This included the contracting out of large sections of the organisation and the transition of employees to the private sector".

Michelle was also a team member working on the development of CAMS Workplace Agreement which was one of the first in the public sector, as well as running the Graduate Development Program and the Mentoring for Women Pilot Program.

Immediately before

joining CALM, Michelle was working at Hamersley Iron's Perth office for six months, after having been selected for the Management Placement Program which is an initiative of the Public Sector Management Office.

Michelle was particularly keen to gain knowledge about private sector human resource practices and negotiated her placement at Hamersley for this reason.

A Pilbara childhood

"There was also a significant nostalgia element involved as I had grown up in the Pilbara—firstly in Goldsworthy, then Finucane Island and lastly at Paraburdoo," she said.

"Working with Hamersley gave me the chance to visit some old 'stomping grounds' as well as gain new knowledge."

Michelle is married to Calvin—an electrical sales engineer—and they have one child, Cassandra, who is a very lively almost three year old!

"When I'm not running around after her, I like to read, have dinner with friends, see movies, and just generally enjoy relaxing with the family."



Michelle Bolitho. Photo by Verna Costello



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