



er eyes green growth

Power is hoping BMD Group's use in carbon-neutral construction projects will win it more work outside the state of Queensland, of which Power is an executive director, recently completed a carbon-road project in Melbourne. Imagine [carbon-neutral projects] are going to be mandated at some stage, says Power. "We think, from a construction point of view, we are doing a lot more in this space." Power's father Mick, a member of the BRW Rich 200 with a net worth of \$1 billion, established BMD in 1979 and lived when his biggest client, BMD Corporation, collapsed in the 1980s. Part of BMD's work has involved residential property developments, and in recent years it has expanded its work in infrastructure projects. The company's revenue in the past year hit \$847.5 million, up 10 per cent from 2007-08. Power says the growth will be flat this year as several projects in Queensland that the company derives about 80 per cent of its revenue – are finished. Power is heading BMD's expansion into New South Wales and Queensland, where it wants to win more residential and infrastructure work, particularly in Queensland, where it has established a joint venture which is looking for work in mining projects. John Stensholt

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8%

Rise in business borrowing in September

Business borrowing, the missing piece in the recovery so far, made a convincing jump in September as consumers wound back on credit card and car loans with a 1.2 per cent drop for the month. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics



Bush bosses behind times

● Businesswoman Robbie Sefton, of Tamworth, New South Wales, says rural and regional businesses must update their employment practices to stem the flow of young people from the bush.

Sefton says the outdated attitudes of some employers threaten the viability of many towns and regional communities.

"We need to be creating more flexible working environments," she says.

"There has to be a shift away from 1950s attitudes and more effort made to become 21st-century employers."

Sefton heads Sefton & Associates, a public relations, marketing and training business with 10 young employees – all women. As an employer, she feels she needs to be attuned to their needs, not the other way around.

"Too many of the best and brightest leave farming communities for their education and never return," she says.

"Our attitude as employers should be, 'How can we as a business support you in your endeavours and where you want to be?' We should encourage young people to get a good education and work in the cities to get the life experience, and then come back with those skills and experiences, which they can bring back to the farm or other businesses."

Sefton requires her employees to be active in rural and regional groups and on business boards. She provides them with time off to pursue those interests.

"It means every one of my team is involved in their own rural communities and that makes us all better at what we do," she says.

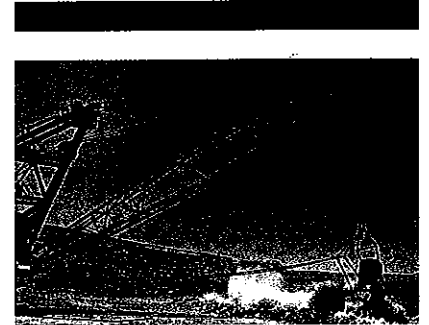
Leo D'Angelo Fisher



● THEY SAID...

It is what I regard as the Goldilocks setting: neither too hot, nor too cold

Commonwealth Bank of Australia chief executive Ralph Norris, forecasting a 1 per cent rise in the cash rate to 4.5 per cent in the coming year.



Coal play plans \$10m float

● The team behind an upcoming mining float is hoping its Surat Basin, Queensland, reserves earmarked for coal and underground coal gasification will appeal to investors.

Metrocoal, a spin-off from the listed Metallica Minerals, plans to raise up to \$10 million at its December 4 float.

While it will begin by extracting coal, Metrocoal chief executive Mike O'Brien says the company will also use UCG technology to produce liquid fuel from its reserves.

"Our strategy is to wait for the technology side of things," he says. "The demand [for UCG] will be there so there is no need to be first and the market has an appetite for this asset."

The Surat Basin, near Toowoomba, has been a hot region for resources in recent years.

Those who have operations or have sold tenements there and the nearby Bowen Basin include BRW Rich 200 list members such as Linc Energy chief Peter Bond, Paul Fudge, Jim Gorman, Ken Talbot and Chris Wallin.

John Stensholt

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