

My BUSINESS

YOUR GUIDE TO DOING BUSINESS ON THE COAST



MAKING PLANS: Accounting North director Matt Richards talks business with Emily Barnes.

PHOTO: JASON DOUGHERTY/171264

HOW I GOT STARTED

Terry O'Brien,
Aeromarine

I STARTED the business out of necessity in October, 1998. Three months earlier I'd left the RAAF after 22 years to work as a project engineer for an aviation company on the Gold Coast.

I spent several years running the F-111 avionics facility at Amberley. Prior to that I'd worked in the F-18 project office and ran the computer-aided maintenance system for the Australian air force, army and navy.

The Gold Coast company was forced to retrench. It was last on, first off for me.

I'd never been unemployed, so I decided to start my own business.

In January 1999 we moved to Bokarina. I was still the only employee, working out of home. Now we've got 17 staff across the south-east. Most are ex-defence force.

We deliver solutions in areas like project management, logistics, risk management and technical writing for companies involved in defence aerospace, defence maritime and commercial aerospace and maritime.

Our clients include Boeing, Raytheon, Australian Aerospace and GE Aviation.

We develop customer relationships based on friendship, trust and respect.

— AS TOLD TO GORDON CLARK



RETENTION GOAL

By GORDON CLARK

EMILY Barnes is the perfect example of why more employers across Australia have rated staff development and retention as their number one priority for 2008 than any other issue.

A report from recruit-

ment company Hudson found 44% of employers said creating an environment to ensure their best talent wasn't tempted to accept a better offer from down the street was on the top of their list, while a further 29% of bosses said attracting suitable staff was their highest priority for the year ahead.

But Hudson managing director for Australia and New Zealand, Gary Lazarotto, said while wages growth had grown 4.2% in the 12 months to September 30, it wasn't as simple as just increasing staff salaries.

"You need to have a competitive remuneration plan, but then also (need) to be

creative in terms of what people are looking for these days," he said.

Mr Lazarotto added the cost of losing a good employee far outweighed the expense of ensuring existing employees felt satisfied, motivated and challenged.

That was exactly what Ms Barnes wasn't when she started work for a small

Sunshine Coast accounting firm four years ago after graduating from James Cook University in Townsville.

Saying the boss treated staff terribly, she left within 12 months, only to find a similar situation at her next workplace.

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As an employer, do you understand your workplace health and safety obligations?

We have extensive experience in assisting employers with understanding and complying with their Workplace Health & Safety Obligations attending interviews during investigations by the Division of WH&S complying with Improvement and Prohibition Notices prosecutions for breaching the WH&S Act

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