

Introducing MITO's new Chairman

Governor-General hosts WorldSkills team

Going for gold in collision repair

Smooth sailing for MITO trailer boat apprentice

Life-changing apprenticeship

Events and graduations

Evolving technology

LPG tank breakthrough

# The torque

MITO NEWS — ISSUE 6 | 2011

## Introducing MITO's new Board Chairman

**David O'Kane couldn't be more qualified for his new role. A former apprentice, motor industry businessman, MTA President and a MITO Board Director; he has knowledge, experience and a keen interest in the industry. What's more, he's passionate about industry training.**

Appointed Chairman of the MITO Board of Directors on 27 April 2011, David has been involved in the motor industry for 35 years. He started as an automotive technician and progressed through service and technician positions to become manager of Rutherford and Bond's Porirua branch. Here he turned an ailing business with nine staff into a highly profitable enterprise with 27 on the team.

Another career highlight was David's appointment as MTA President. He held the position for three years; the longest term of any president in the organisation's 93-year history.

David has seen significant changes in industry technology during his career. "Today, sophisticated machinery and new technology means there are more career options than ever before."

Having hired and trained many apprentices, David understands the

importance of lifelong learning. "Industry training doesn't stop at apprenticeships," he says. "Things are changing all the time and we need to continually adapt to new developments. Learning has to be a career commitment, for all of us."

David says MITO's immediate challenge is to operate effectively within a tightened

funding budget, while continuing its focus on promoting apprenticeships.

"MITO has excellent partnerships with employers and the government," David says. "I believe that, working together, we can take MITO in some exciting new directions, and I look forward to helping to make that happen." 🌀



David O'Kane



Leveraging advantage for our industry through strategic alliances and partnerships characterises MITO.

While we have traditionally focussed on

the automotive industry, we have always been alert to the more expansive transport sector.

The synergy is powerful and compelling and lends itself to a national imperative. Furthermore, it aligns with the Government's mandate for greater effectiveness and efficiency.

So it comes as no surprise that Tranzqual, the ITO for road transport, passenger services, warehousing and logistics, and ports and stevedoring, will merge with MITO on 1 October 2011.

What does this mean for MITO stakeholders? An opportunity to extend career pathways across the transport and logistics spectrum and provide a broader range of qualifications. Furthermore, it is an opportunity for MITO to take a leadership role, responding to the Government's directive for collaboration and co-operation across the sector.

What does this mean for MITO learners and enterprises? Continued focussed and dedicated service from MITO!

So what do you need to do? Absolutely nothing! It is business as usual for our MITO enterprises but if you have any questions, you are most welcome to contact me on (04) 494 6230 or at [janet.lane@mito.org.nz](mailto:janet.lane@mito.org.nz).

I look forward to the conversation!

Janet Lane  
**Chief Executive**

## Governor-General hosts WorldSkills team

### The Governor-General recently hosted a reception for the New Zealand WorldSkills team the 'Tool Blacks'.

Former Governor-General Right Hon. Anand Satyanand and Lady Satyanand held the reception to honour the team before their departure for London. They will represent New Zealand alongside 1200 young people from 52 nations who are competing in 45 skill areas.

Drew Avery, Curtis Hartley and Andre Prinsloo are representing New Zealand's motor industry in the 'Tool Blacks' team.

Drew of Stokes Valley Collision Repair Centre will be gunning for gold in the vehicle

refinishing category, while his teammates Andre from RJ Don Panelbeaters on the North Shore and Curtis from Archibald Motors in Kaitaia will take on the world's best young technicians in autobody repair and automobile technology respectively.

The reception at Government House gave the team members a chance to meet the other skills competitors, and introduce their expert skill advisors, Rick Lunn, Roger Hiini and Simon Phelps. They also met MITO's new Board Chairman David O'Kane.

Best wishes to our NZ 'Tool Blacks' in the upcoming International WorldSkills Competition in London in October. 🇳🇿



*Pictured front row: Rick Lunn, MITO CEO Janet Lane, Governor-General Right Hon. Anand Satyanand & Lady Satyanand, MITO Board Chairman David O'Kane and Drew Avery. Back row from left, Andre Prinsloo, Simon Phelps, Roger Hiini and Curtis Hartley.*

## Going for gold in collision repair

**What's the next best thing to loving your job? It's being really good at it – and it gets even better when the two combine to win you the title of 'apprentice of the year'!**

That's what's happened for Anthony Armstrong and Cameron Bowman, who in May this year were presented with the Collision Repair Association's top apprenticeship awards for 2010: Anthony the Golden Gun for automotive refinishing; and Cameron the Golden Hammer for collision repair.

The pair were flown to Melbourne for the awards ceremony, which was part of the CRA's four-day annual conference. As well as being presented with their official trophies, they received \$1,000 each – a fitting reward for their outstanding performance during the year.

Anthony has now finished his apprenticeship with Harvey Collision Repairs in Te Rapa, northwest of Hamilton. Part of a team of four refinishers, he's proven a natural for the job – especially, says business owner Brent Shepherd, when tackling the finer details of colour matching.

"Anthony's very good at it – so good that the others in the team often ask for his help," he says.

Brent says he's been impressed with Anthony ever since he offered him a week-long trial with the business. "He turned up with a twisted ankle and obviously in pain," he says. "To me that showed not only his interest but also his commitment, and he has continued to demonstrate those qualities ever since."

In 2010 Anthony was an IAG State sponsored apprentice. This award recognised his level of skill and commitment to collision repair.

Anthony says that the motor industry was an obvious choice for a career. As the second-youngest of five boys, the 22-year-old "grew up with cars", and he still enjoys working with them in his spare time. He initially tried panelbeating after finishing a pre-trade course; however, he soon discovered that refinishing was for him.


"There's something about seeing a finished paint job; it just makes me feel good about myself," he says.

Cameron has also finished his apprenticeship and is now underway with MITO's Collision Repair Extension Programme. That's a significant achievement given that the 22-year-old has two children and has just succeeded in saving for and buying his first home.

"Cameron's a driven young man who takes his responsibilities very seriously," says Tony Carson, owner of Greenmeadows Panel and Paint in Napier. "He's also highly skilled, and best of all he likes his job."

Cameron himself is modest about his achievements, but admits to a lifelong interest in cars. He particularly enjoys the challenge of working on a variety of cars and learning new collision repair techniques.

"I also like the people I work with," he says. "I've had to work hard, and they've been great at supporting me through it all."

Having employed about 15 apprentices in the 12 years that he's owned the business, Tony is well qualified to say that Cameron has an excellent future in the industry. "His win recognises his commitment to quality work and great customer service," he says. "I think he'll go far." 



*Cameron Bowman*



*Anthony Armstrong*



## EMPLOYERS PROFILE

### Smooth sailing for MITO trailer boat apprentice

**“MITO apprenticeships are a great way to go – they suit the way we work, and they’re definitely good for business.”**

That’s the view of Lindsay Hollard, owner and manager of West Coast Marine in New Plymouth which specialises in servicing boat engines and supplying marine accessories. Since its establishment in 2003, the business has grown from employing one person to six, a success that Lindsay attributes to great products, excellent service and the skills of his team.

“We’re very selective about the people we employ because we rely on word of mouth to get most of our business, and in turn our clients rely on us to keep them safe at sea,” he says. “I like apprenticeships because they enable us to train new staff from the start, and according to our own standards.”


Lindsay goes on to say, “Our industry needs skilled people for the future,” he says. “If we don’t put in the effort now, we’ll end up with a poorly equipped workforce.”

Two years ago Lindsay employed MITO apprentice, Peter Dreaver. Now 19 years old, Peter describes his job as “awesome”, with opportunities to work on a huge range of motors as well as get involved in the

engineering side of the business. He sees his apprenticeship as a neat fit with his personal interests of jet-skiing and water-skiing, as well as motorsport and motocross.

Both Lindsay and Peter comment on the supportive environment in the workplace. “Bruce Davis is one of our senior staff who has completed his MITO apprenticeship and is very good at helping Peter with his on-the-job training,” says Lindsay.

Lindsay’s career has included working as a lead mechanic for an American Indy car team. Lindsay’s passionate about the power of learning. He says that, through his training, Peter is gaining new knowledge and skills that he can share with his workmates, while at the same time adding value to the business.

“I believe that what you put in is what you get out,” he says. “We teach our apprentices, and they teach us.” 



*Peter Dreaver and Lindsay Hollard starting up a trailer boat engine*

# Life-changing apprenticeship

**Spend a few minutes talking to Neil Tovell-Soundy and you soon find out that his MITO apprenticeship is much more than a step up the career ladder – it's a life-changing experience.**

About ten years ago Neil was badly affected by isocyanate poisoning. As well as experiencing short-term memory loss, he lost his sense of taste and smell and the ability to read and write properly.

This had serious implications for his employment prospects, and for the next few years Neil was forced to take low-skilled, low-employment jobs in an attempt to support his wife and four children. Then he met Neville Wood, the Service Manager for Gough Materials Handling in Nelson, and life took a miraculous turn for the better.

"I've always been interested in mechanics and I already had some

experience in panelbeating and refinishing," says Neil. "So when Neville offered me a job I jumped at the chance; it was the opportunity I'd been looking for."

Neville's offer came with the proviso that Neil start a MITO apprenticeship, which included providing him with help to improve his reading and writing. This involved an initial assessment, and now every Tuesday Neil meets with Jenny, a literacy and numeracy specialist, to sharpen up his skills.

"It's brilliant," he says. "I'm learning to study again through reading, bookwork and computer-based exercises, while improving my handwriting at the same time. I'm so much better than I used to be, and it's showing in my work."

Gough Materials Handling specialises in leasing, selling and servicing Hyster forklifts. Neil works on a wide range of machines,

from 2.5-tonne to 50-tonne models fuelled by electricity, diesel and petrol.

Neville Wood says he's doing well. "As an adult apprentice with some previous experience, Neil has a lot to offer the company," he says. "He's clearly interested in the industry and is more than willing to get stuck in and get his hands dirty. The help he's getting with his reading and writing will help to set him up for future roles within the business."

Neil says he can't thank Neville, Gough and MITO enough for their support. "They've been absolutely brilliant," he says. "I feel as though my life as back on track.

"I'm here for good now – you'd have to tear me away!"



Neil Tovell-Soundy

## EVENTS & GRADUATIONS

### GRADUATION DATES JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER

7 July	Ashburton
14 July	South Canterbury
25 July	Nelson-Tasman
18 August	Hamilton
20 August	Marlborough District



MTA Fastest Spanner

### EVENT DATES

28 July	MTA Fastest Spanner Invercargill
9 August	Dannevirke Careers Evening
10 August	Naenae Careers Evening
10 August	Taranaki Industry Day
11 August	Gore Careers Evening
13 August	NZ Brake Specialists Conference, Wellington
18 August	Avondale College Careers Evening
26 August	Tairāwhiti Roadshow
20 September	Glenfield College Careers Evening
22-23 September	Grasskart Challenge Canterbury

Factory fitted GPS navigation console



## INDUSTRY NEWS

# Evolving technology

**During the past few years there have been many new innovations in motor vehicles. It seems there is never a dull moment.**

It would now be very uncommon to see modern vehicles without stability and traction control or multiple air bags. We now have vehicles with up to 9 airbags including knee protection and dual stage deployment for extra safety.

Given the move to ban mobile phone use when driving, factory fitted Bluetooth is now standard in a far wider range of vehicles.

"Paddle" gear shifters behind the steering wheel are another innovation being used to help keep two hands on the wheel when driving.



Paddle gear shifter on steering wheel.

© Chris Benny Imaging

If we look at the environment, fine particle filters have come a long way to reducing emissions from diesel vehicles and we are seeing litres per 100 kms figures reducing all the time. Who would have thought it would be possible to reduce fuel usage from a large vehicle with six or eight cylinders by shutting down three or four cylinders under certain load and then returning the engine to full power when necessary without affecting driver comfort or vehicle performance.

### What else is happening?

Here are just a few more things to consider for the future:

- Less stress and more direct journeys using factory fitted navigation systems
- Radar controlled cruise control which measures your vehicle's distance from the vehicle in front
- Intelligent car parking – cars that parallel park themselves!
- And of course fully electric vehicles. 🚗

Article featured in FleetSmart FleetNews Issue 6, 2011.

## LPG tank breakthrough

**A lawnmower technician is on the verge of a major automotive breakthrough that might just spark a renaissance in NZ in automotive LPG installations. Internationally, the deal's implications are massive.**

Peter Ellmers and his Auckland-based company Propane Performance Industries (PPI) have spent eight years developing a flat automotive LPG tank, the design for which they have sold to an Australian car manufacturer.

The flat tank takes up much less room than the traditional cylindrical tanks and the deal could be major league for the venture's Kiwi backers, sparking interest from other large manufacturers searching for alternative fuel technologies.

The car company, which cannot yet be identified because of a confidentiality agreement, will incorporate the new flat tank into a range of LPG-dedicated large cars that will be launched soon.

Peter said testing showed the vehicles using the new tank could go 850km on one tank of LPG at a cost of about A\$40, without any loss in performance.

Once production starts in July, PPI's Chinese manufacturers will turn out 80 tanks a day.

The technology was developed by an American munitions and rocket motor manufacturer.

Peter, who started his working life in the family lawnmower business on Wellington's Cuba St, went to see them after reading about the flat tank on their website – and came away with the world rights to commercialise it.

There followed years of testing and a lot of cash turning the technology into a commercial proposition.

The American company sent equipment needed to make the first design tanks to Brisbane boatbuilder Guy Obren, an old friend of Peter, and an investor in the business.

The Australian deal was a major stepping stone for PPI because it meant other car companies would now understand its robust design. The investment had been huge, Ellmers said. "You've just got to be convinced about the whole thing." 

Article appeared in Gasline July 2011 – the newsletter of the LPG Association of New Zealand.



Image courtesy of PPI



Flat LPG tank design may boost the LPG market in New Zealand

Image courtesy of PPI



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