

Job Market

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2010

SECTION

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Top job for Napier high-flier

The fascinating waterfront job proves a big challenge in a male-dominated environment.

LINDA MARTIN has always had a fascination with machinery. And it's an interest that has seen her reach some pretty interesting heights.

The Napier woman is a crane operator and trainer for ISO, a New Zealand-owned company that provides a range of waterfront cargo logistics services, including transport and distribution, marshalling and warehousing, IT solutions, and stevedoring.

She started out working as a casual stevedore but then plucked up the courage to ask if she could learn to operate the cranes.

"I was wanting to climb up and have a go, it looked really interesting. I love machinery, any machinery, diggers, loaders – if I get the chance I'll give anything a go," she says.

At the time she didn't know of any other women crane drivers and thought it would be a job that would be hard to break into, but ISO said "no worries".

In a male-dominated environment it's a big challenge, says Miss Martin, and she's used to the looks a lot of men throw her when they glance up and see a female at the controls.

"When the guys first see a woman in the crane they do a double take, but after a while they get their head around it." Since becoming a crane operator 10 years ago, Miss Martin has paved the way for other women and she's now one of several female crane operators among the 30 Napier staff.

The ISO stevedoring operation itself manages millions of tonnes of cargo on and off hundreds of vessels throughout New Zealand each year and it's the 41-year-old mother's responsibility to operate the cranes on the ships and load cargo, such as logs, sawn timber, pulp, coal and palm kernel.

Because ISO operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year it's not the average 9am-5pm job either. Miss Martin usually does 12-hour shifts and a typical day could involve her loading a 30,000 tonne vessel within a tight timeframe. She is also often called on to travel to other ports to help out when needed – in the last month alone she's provided back-up at ports in Whangarei, Wellington and Gisborne.

"I just go where there's a need. I enjoy being in different places, it's good experience and every trip is different. "I just love my job – every ship that comes in is a challenge because the cranes are different and they have different operating systems, it's all in the timing," says Miss Martin.

"It can get quite rough up there too, it's a bit of a muscle builder because you have to throw them around a bit and you definitely can't be scared of heights."

Working on the wharves also involves a large amount of teamwork, something Miss Martin finds just as satisfying as operating the cranes.

"You can speed up the whole process with great teamwork and confidence among your team, so it's a good feeling on both counts – up in the crane and when it's a team effort."

As well as being a crane driver Miss Martin has taken on the additional responsibility of training new operators within the last year.

"That's the biggest challenge because it takes a lot of patience and everyone learns at a different pace, but it is hugely rewarding when people complete their training."

"Obviously safety is an absolute priority, and in my role it's important that a crane



Dock side: Things are looking up for crane operator and trainer Linda Martin.

driver is confident with what they are doing to ensure all operations are carried out safely and our excellent safety record is maintained."

Not only is Miss Martin passionate about her job because it is so varied and customer-focused, she's enjoying the

benefits of the extra training and development opportunities ISO is providing her.

Recently she has been doing some office work as wharf co-ordinator and it's her job to make sure all scanner systems are working well. ISO uses scanning technology

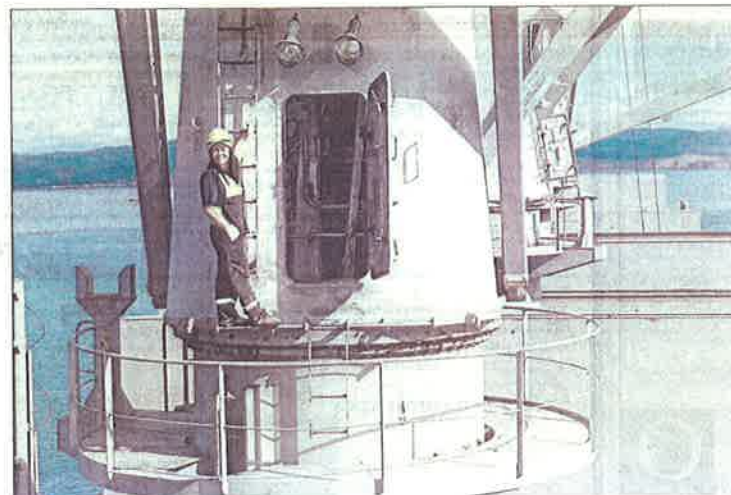
system where, for example, each of the 32,000 tonnes of logs loaded on the ship are scanned and Miss Martin can identify any one particular log through technology.

"I try to help out the boss as much as I can, and it gives me another string to my bow."

She's even been seen to help out on the diggers when no-one else is operating them and is also certified to drive the tractors in the yard.

It's a far cry from the screenprinting job she had before entering the port environment, but a decision she has no regrets about making.

"I guess I'm proof that women can do anything and my advice to any female who might be holding back is to go for gold – you never know until you ask."



Pencil Sketch

- Name: Linda Martin
- Inspired By: My children
- Favourite Movie: Braveheart
- Favourite Music: Anything by AC/DC
- Favourite Quote: "Trust others how you would want to be treated"
- Favourite Website: Livingandliving.com
- Favourite Food: Seafood

ACCOUNTING	E2	HR & RECRUITMENT	E5
ADMINISTRATION	E4	IT & TELECOMS	E4
BUSINESS & PERSONAL SERVICES	E4	KEY APPOINTMENTS	E2-E9
CAREER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	E5	MANAGEMENT	E5
CHILD CARE	E3	OVERSEAS VACANCIES	E3
CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY	E3	PART-TIME VACANCIES	E3
EDUCATIONAL VACANCIES	E4	RETAIL	E2
ENGINEERING & SCIENCE	E5	SALES	E5
GOVERNMENT	E3-E4	SITUATIONS VACANT	E6
HEALTH APPOINTMENTS	E5	TRAVEL & SERVICES VACANCIES	E6
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People on the Move

Linda Rieper



Linda Rieper has been appointed chief operating officer for the Wellington Regional Stadium Trust. Ms Rieper was the stadium's commercial manager and was previously a senior manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Dean Nikora



Takapau farmer Dean Nikora has been made a trustee of the 'The Agricultural and Marketing Research and Development Trust Board'. Mr Nikora is a winner of the Manulife Excellence in Farming Ahuwhenua Trophy and is on Ballance's board of directors.

Phil Goodin



Technology finance company Equifax has appointed Phil Goodin as head of sales and marketing. He joins Equifax from MARAC Finance where he was financial services manager in the commercial team.

People on the Move is a free service highlighting recent appointments. For inclusion, email details and a photograph to: supplements@dompost.co.nz