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mine



A SHINING LIGHT

Oyu Tolgoi's journey brings
a ray of hope to new mines

+ RIO TINTO'S DRIVERLESS MINES

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Insight

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN RESOURCES ALLIANCE (AWRA) HIT THE GROUND RUNNING WITH ITS E-MENTORING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN AND A GUIDE TO MASTERING FLEXIBLE WORK. **AMMA** REPORTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FEMALE ROLES MODELS IN THE RESOURCE INDUSTRY

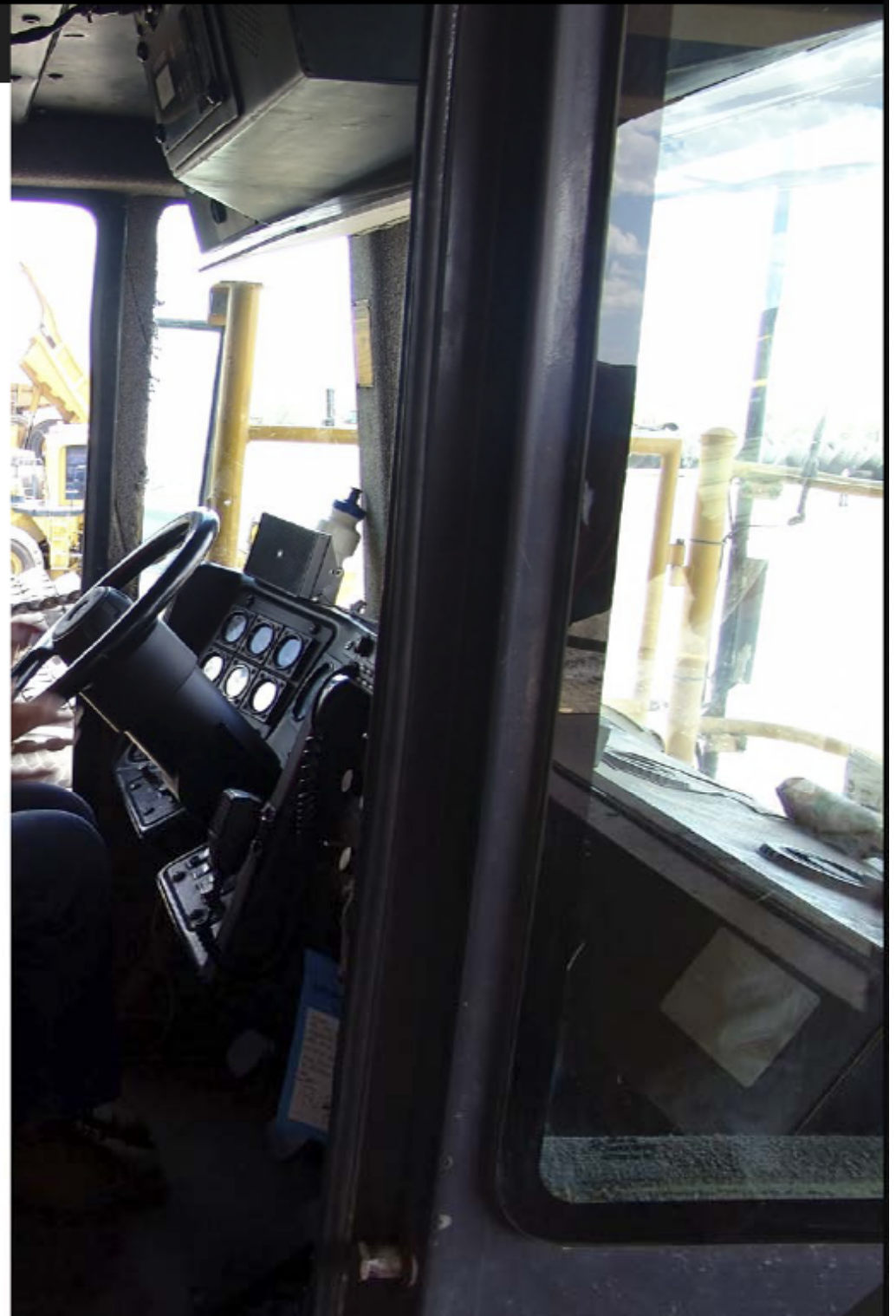
Making Connections: Working for Gender Diversity

*Scroll down or swipe
to read the article*

Matching 200 women within the Australian resources and allied sectors with an experienced industry mentor through its innovative e-mentoring programme was a milestone for the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA), reinforcing the benefits of thinking outside the box in a bid to address gender diversity.

Developed three years ago with funding from the Australian Government, the AWRA e-Mentoring Program is the only initiative of its kind addressing the barriers that are preventing some women working in resources from receiving mentoring, such as remote locations, non-traditional hours and a lack of access to female role models.

AWRA spokesperson Tara Diamond says the success of the programme is a positive achievement for an industry that needs to increase its gender diversity. "Women comprise about 15% of the resource industry workforce compared to 46% across the Australian working population," says Diamond. "Innovative approaches like AWRA



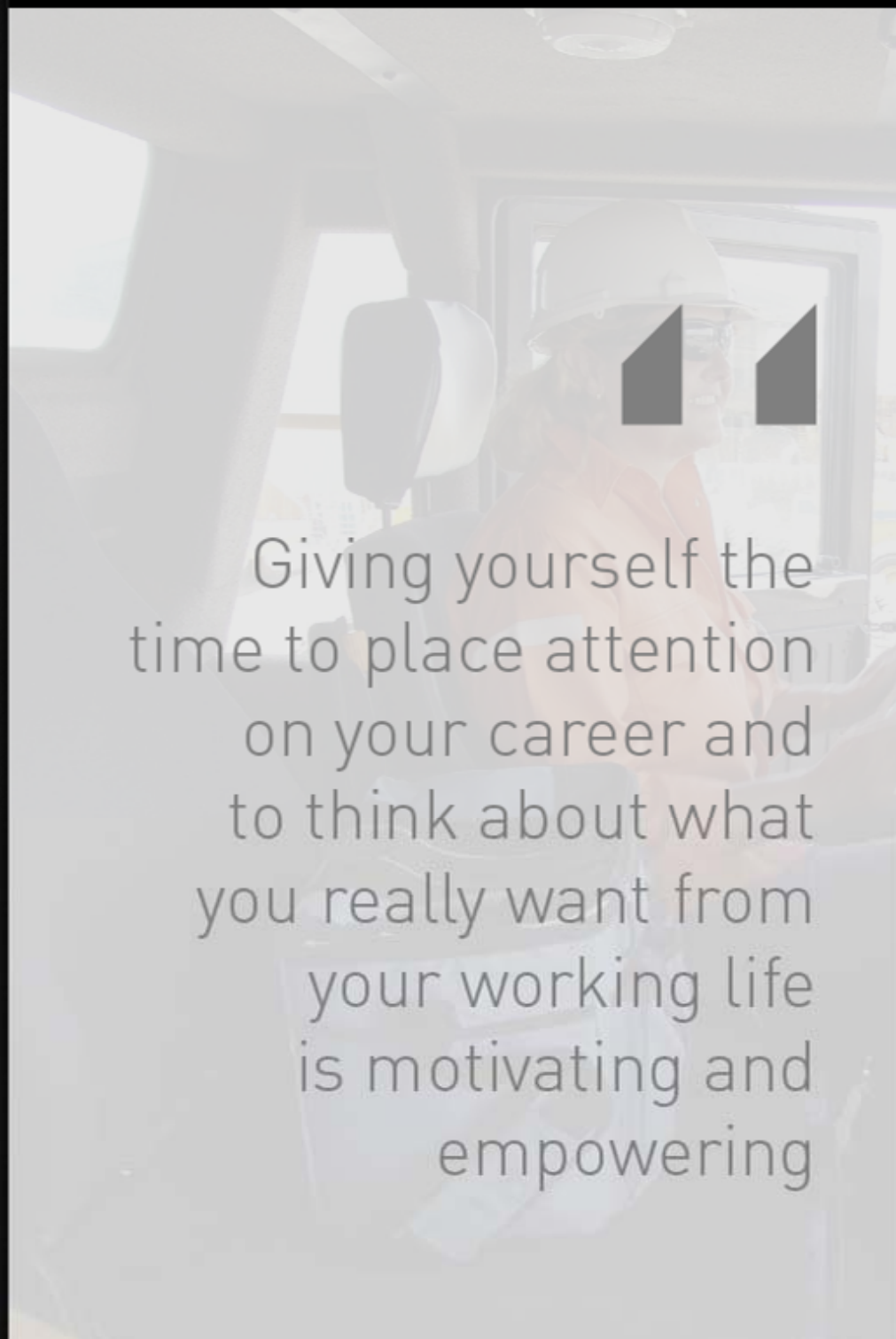
e-Mentoring are a practical way of supporting women's career development which will hopefully see greater numbers reach management and leadership positions.

"What makes this programme so great is that mentees and mentors don't have to be based in the same town or be available to meet face-to-face. Using an online platform and various communications tools means women who travel to remote sites or work non-traditional hours can still benefit from mentoring."



MEETING MENTORS

One mentee, Catherine Bruneton, was a recent graduate and first-year engineer in the oil and gas sector when she signed-up to the programme. Although she lived and worked in Western Australia, Bruneton was matched with Queensland-based Lana Van Wyk - a business analyst with a background in engineering. The women



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communicated via phone, email and video chat software, finding times that would fit around their busy work schedules.

“A large plus was the ability to gain a mentor outside my work group, this allowed me to broaden my network and learn about other areas within the resource industry,” Bruneton says. “The programme allowed me to catch up with my mentor without having to leave the office or site. It was a great opportunity to learn, ask questions and to reflect on my choices. Most of all, it was an opportunity to talk candidly with another female mentor.”

Van Wyk agrees that the ability to interact with her mentee without being in the same location made her involvement easy. “The technology interface provides great flexibility for busy executives who may not have a lot of time available in their schedules,” she explains. “We set goals for our relationship on the quantity and quality of our interactions early on, covering our approaches and personality preferences. We then looked at key personal development areas and strategies around personal resilience and self-motivation.”

With the programme attracting even greater attention after reaching its ‘200th pair’ milestone, Bruneton has some words of wisdom for other



women considering mentoring. “Think of the positive outcomes you can achieve,” she says. “You’ll find that giving yourself the time to place attention on your career and to think about what you really want from your working life is motivating and empowering.”

The next round of AWRA e-mentoring will kick off in the middle of this year and Diamond is keen to promote the benefits to potential mentors and mentees.



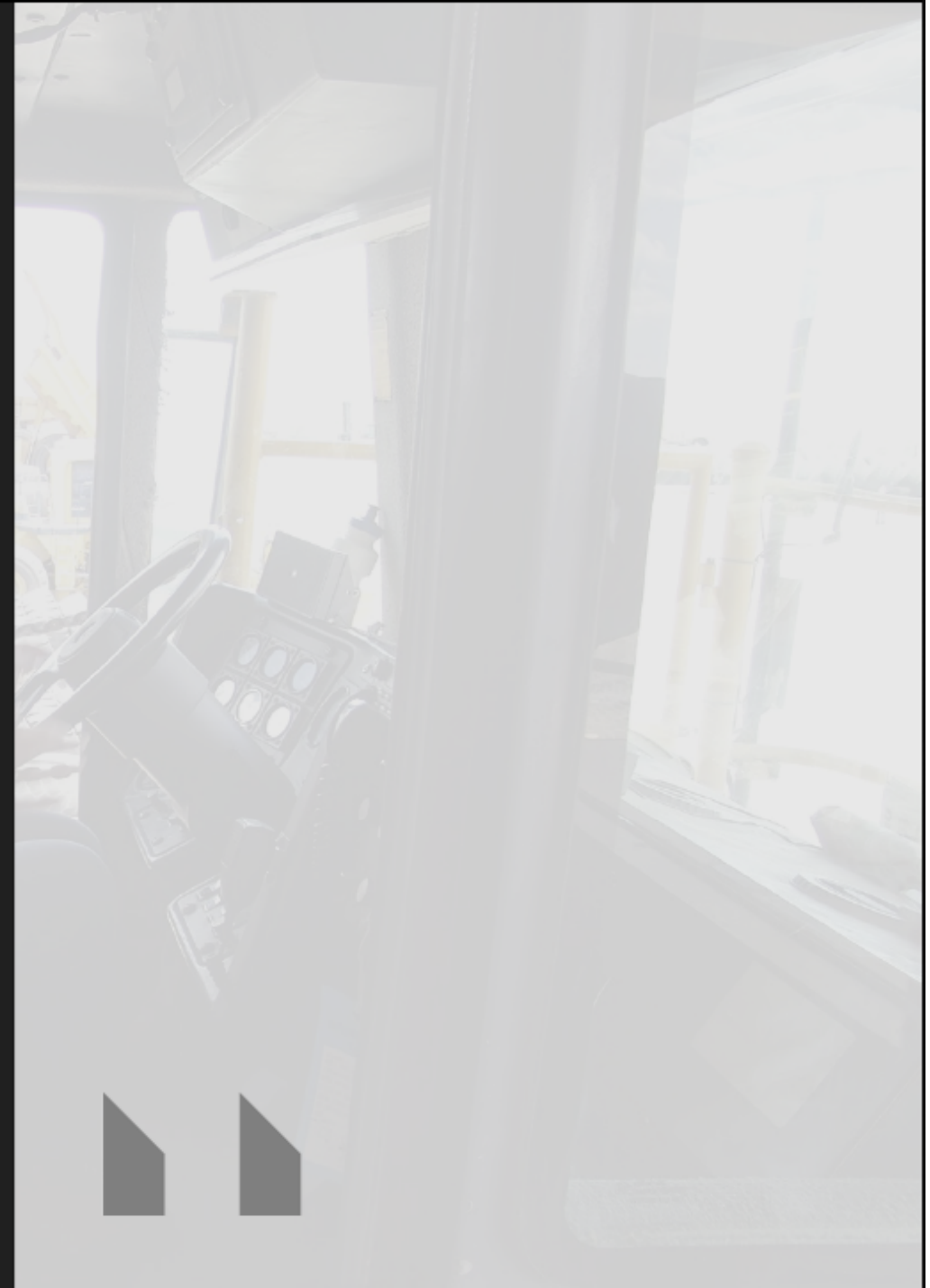
MAKING FLEXIBLE WORK

In recent years, many of Australia's resource industry employers have overhauled their recruitment and human resources practices in recognition of the evolving needs of modern employees. This has been largely driven by social and staffing changes such as managing ageing workforces, younger generations preferring more agile work patterns, and a greater focus on gender diversity.

One concept gaining attention is flexible working arrangements, which enables a person to choose when, where and, in some cases, how long they engage in activities.

Despite the many benefits, Diamond says resource employers have often failed to recognise how flexible working can be put into practice. To tackle this, the AWRA recently launched its Guide to Flexible Work as a practical tool to help employers identify and implement these arrangements.

"The challenge for the Australian resource industry lies in implementing arrangements in workplaces



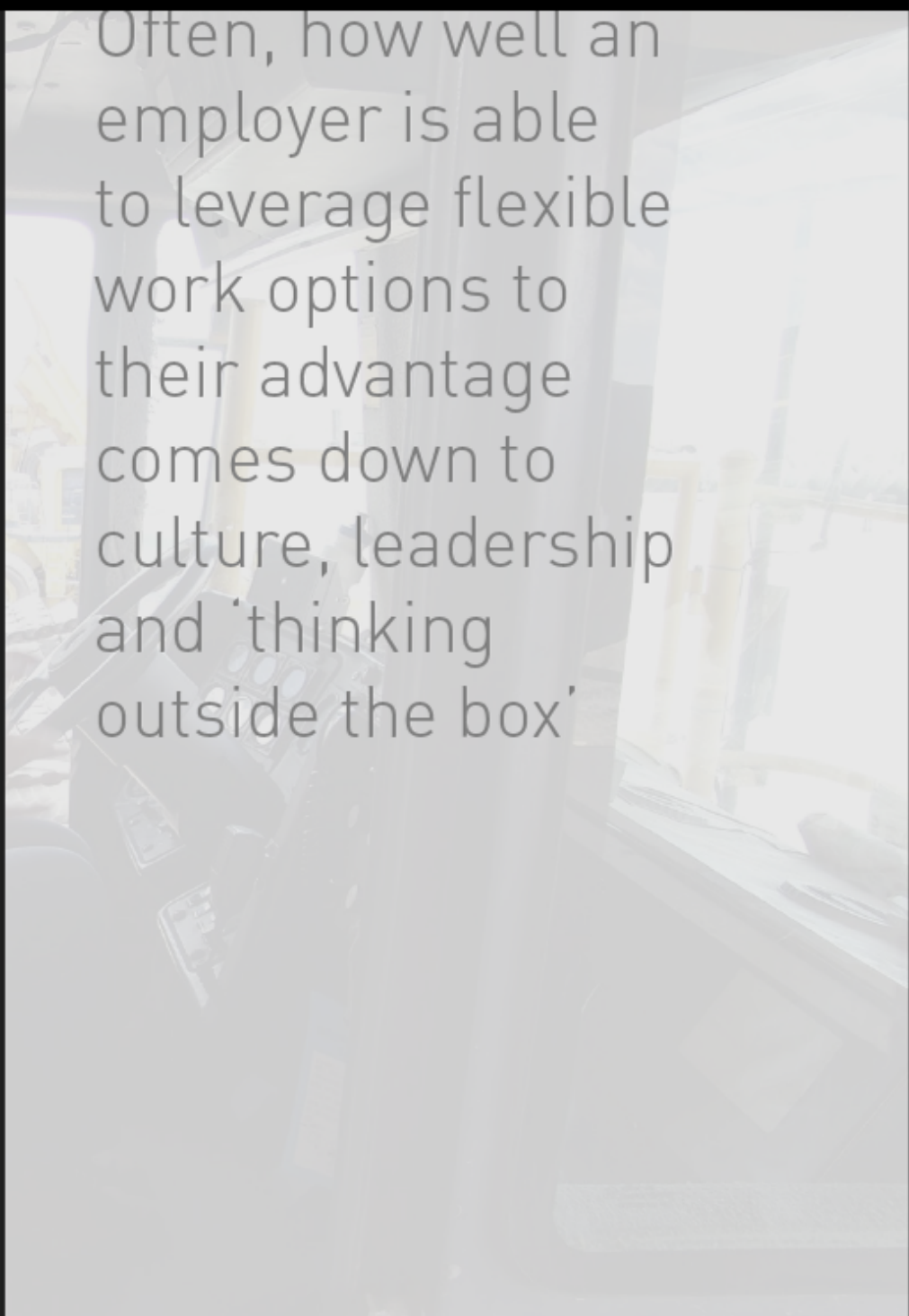
Often, how well an

ues in implementing arrangements in workplaces that have historically proven un conducive to flexible work options,” explains Diamond. “For example, employment in the resource industry often requires travel to remote locations where projects operate on a 24hr basis with strict health and safety rules impacting employee movements.

“Of course, this isn’t to say flexible working arrangements are unachievable in remote or other fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) locations. While each workplace is unique and needs to be assessed on its individual needs, often how well an employer is able to leverage flexible work options to their advantage comes down to culture, leadership and ‘thinking outside the box’.

She adds that the “AWRA’s guide details 13 specific type of flexible work arrangements such as traditional part-time work, teleworking, job sharing, flexible start/finish hours and phased retirement, and includes key considerations and example policies, and templates for employers’ use. “It also covers useful legal tips and real examples of how various resources and related sector organisations have successfully incorporated flexible work practices for the benefit of both the organisation and employees.”

As the AWRA works toward its goal of women



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As the AWRA works toward its goal of women comprising 25% of the national workforce by 2020, assisting resource employers with the implementation of flexible working practices and providing mentoring opportunities for women will remain critical for 2016 and beyond. ●

AWRA is facilitated by national resource industry employer group AMMA. Visit www.awra.org.au to download AWRA's Guide to Flexible Work.

