

Edison Consulting Appoints New Chief Executive

6 July 2021: Edison Consulting Group is delighted to announce the appointment of Wendy Edwards as their new Chief Executive to help the company embrace the transformation of the electricity industry.

Edison is a highly valued partner in New Zealand's energy sector and offers specialised design, project management and professional services to a wide range of electricity generation, transmission, and distribution clients nationwide.

The demand for clean, sustainable energy and the emergence of new technology will revolutionise the way power is generated, transmitted and consumed in the near future. This has prompted Edison to search for new leadership talent and appoint a board of directors to help guide the 25 year-old company through this next phase.

Edwards holds a Master of Computing Science and is currently the General Manager of Water and Construction at Ventia. She previously spent 15 years at Transpower as a business leader of risk management, assurance, compliance, business continuity and information management, before being appointed Operational Engineering Manager to provide strategic and operational advice for all transmission assets.

“Edison has an outstanding reputation in the industry, and from personal experience of having worked with them, they offer top rate delivery,” Edwards says. “You know what you're going to get, it's good quality, it's on time – it's a safe pair of hands. I feel extremely fortunate to be able to lead a great company like that.”

Edwards says there's a lot to understand about Edison itself, including how to leverage the vast range of skills and experience available in-house. She is particularly looking forward to rolling out Edison's new strategy which will greatly benefit its clients.

“Electrification and what's going on in the industry is really exciting, and Edison is well-placed to help clients with that. But it's a new emerging area so being able to spread our wings is actually pretty cool.

“Partnering with our clients for delivery will be a key focus. Edison’s already good at partnering but in terms of the new technology and new opportunities, it’s going to become more important than ever. Where we’re heading as a company is actually about strengthening our position and delivery to our clients, and expanding our capability to meet future demands.”

Edison Board Chairman Craig Hattle was impressed by both the calibre and number of applicants who applied for the CE role. “Any of the top six would have been more than competent. We were in the luxury position of really deciding what would be the absolute perfect fit for the role,” he says.

The Board was looking for someone who would embrace the future but at the same time, respect where the company has come from. “As every candidate came through, we had to ask ourselves ‘would this appointment signify real change? Does it bring diversity of thought and broader thinking? Does it bring what is needed to embrace future change?

“But at the same time, Edison has got a unique place in the market and is known for its strong relationships, reliability and work ethic. We needed to make sure there was someone at the top who really gets that. Wendy was head of quality and risk assurance at Transpower for years; she understands the industry and the importance of high-quality work. But at the same time, she has got fresh thinking and a completely different way of approaching the future. And that’s precisely what we need.”

Edison’s founder and current General Manager, Michael Nicholson, says the new CE appointment is part of natural succession planning and a new strategic direction. Nicholson will take on a new role within the company, focusing on special projects and how Edison can expand its horizons.

“Edison, and the electricity industry, have got a pretty clear path on where we need to go. The electrification of NZ Inc is the big one. De-carbonisation of our industries and transport will see significant opportunity for people in the electricity supply space. We’ve got to tap into new forms of generation like solar and we have to work smarter, and with bigger data, to adapt.

“People will soon be able to turn power on and off from their phones and that’s going to happen really quickly. The industry is going to be forced to make significant investment in those places and Edison is going to have to adapt and move with those changes.”

Nicholson was thrilled to be handing the reins over to someone of Edwards’ capabilities. “This is a people lead business. Wendy is a great people person. She’s an authentic leader and has a great coaching style, and she’s got an eye to the future. We’re very excited to have her join our team.”

Edwards’ official start date at Edison is 1 October 2021.

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