

Transcript: Director's Chat 9 August 2019

Craig: Hello well uh kia orana katoa. Epetoma o te reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani. So uh happy um Cook Islands uh Language Week um great to have everyone here um

Sitting beside me is Priya Sundar-Delamare, as of about a month ago Priya um great to great to have you with me. There is a good reason I've got Priya here um but we'll we'll come to that shortly, she's just going to have to sit here for a little while while we go through everything else um and I will flag that I got Priya up here about uh she arrived about five minutes ago um in relation to a phone call from me about fifteen minutes ago that said "you need to get here" so uh great to have you here

Priya: thank you, it's called being agile team

Craig: *laughs* Love it. We um we did have a bit of a joke we were trying to get the lighting right for the um for the video, we had a bit of a joke about the contrast um unfortunately everything's white *Craig gestures to himself* so uh I've got I've got no show.

Priya and Craig laugh

Craig: Um look just uh running through a few things team, the first uh theme that we did that I did want to touch on again and I've done a little bit of talking about our business plan and one thing that I'm very mindful of that when we do business planning is we tend to do a lot of talking around the planning um and it takes a long time sometimes to get to the um to get to the the actual um doing bit but we are setting this um this business plan up to succeed, we've got a lot of people involved in it. Um we had a meeting on uh Monday uh with the lead team and just confirmed a few things um around the uh around the whole um business plan and and just wanted to sort of I guess share that with you and where we've landed you will, we will be coming up with a roadshow in September to run through this with staff and get your feedback and thoughts but where we've landed as a lead team is that um our vision is "Regulatory Services is recognized as a world leader in delivering regulatory excellence based on outstanding customer service." Now that's a pretty high ideal um it's a big aspiration I believe we're probably there in a lot of uh a lot of areas in our business already in terms of world class in delivering excellence um but we need to take it to another level if we can um and we want to build that with you um as staff so I guess the keywords for me in there is 'world leader' um it's 'regulatory excellence' and that can look like a whole lot of different things and we need to determine exactly what that means uhm but also 'based on outstanding customer service' and of course Priya is Manger of Customer Insights and Experience with SSI uhm so very relevant you are here when we start talking about these things. Um we're obviously lining this up under the game changers I've shared that with you in the past and we've identified three key focus areas that um that we will be working on and that is all about our customer making sure we're engaging um having y- having input from our customer and delivering fantastic customer experience. It's equally important uh the the next focus area is our people. I want you guys um loving coming to work because we've empowered you, we've given you the opportunity and the um to do what you need to do to uh to do the jobs you're paid to do and to uh to get huge job satisfaction out of that. And the and the last area is around tools and capability

and you know if we don't uh set you up to succeed with the right systems, the right tools then uh then it's always going to be a struggle, and you'll hear me saying this a lot over the next month or so but I do want to apologize for what we've put you through over the last 2 or 3 years uhm you know we've had a lot of issues with systems and I know a lot of staff have given up telling us about that uh we are looking to address that and we we're working to um to make sure we do get our system um fit for purpose so working on that at the moment um the priority areas that have fallen out of those 3 focus areas are: business optimization um in terms of systems processes and data and um Steve Tyson will be leading that uh that uh workstream for us, culture and capability and I'm picking up the responsibility on that um workstream to lead that, Health Safety and Wellness and Lindie du Toit will look after that, Maori Responsiveness which of course Puawai Kake will lead, and customer and stakeholders and uh James Hassall will be the lead on that um so Ian Smallburn and Ian McCormick obviously in building um control and resource consents are both heavily involved in the operational side of things um they've got a lot on their plate they are um support leads across most of those different functions um so they are not being cut out um they are a key part of it and we'll put a whole lot of people around this as we move forward so we're just at the stage now where we're starting to develop our key priority areas um for the next 12 well next 3 years actually um and again I'll come back to you in September on the roadshow and share that with you and get your input into it.

Right uhm the other thing I had on the list was the North Western hub uhm I think hopefully um everyone's caught up on the news about the new North Western hub um preferred locations. I was part of the group that um did the evaluation and we we considered a lot of things including uh we drove out to the different sites we walked around and we walked between transport hubs and we walked to um to amenity um you know restaurants um cafes, food halls and so on um in the end we've settled on um 3 potential sites in Albany. Now I know that will probably be of some frustration to a number of people in the Henderson office and I can understand that. We did look at Westgate unfortunately there is no plan for a transport hub to go into Westgate for at least 10 years which I think is a little bit disappointing when you consider the growth out in that way uh in that direction but unfortunately that did really discount um Westgate as a location. The more we looked at transport and amenity we have as I say settled on Albany um there are three different sites that uh all have positives and negatives and we are now working um with the developers of those sites to say well you know basically "what can you offer?" um you know "what's it going to cost us?" "how are you going to fit out the building?" and so on. They will be brand new buildings um they will be fit for purpose uh I think it is quite exciting. Um albeit that it obviously there will be an impact on those staff that will have to travel. Just want to make the point that um we will not be closing the Henderson office entirely, there will still be ah um hub office out there. So there will still be the opportunity for people to work from there um and of course flexible working will also be a huge opportunity.

coughs excuse me. Dear o dear. Yes I might need a water Patricia *coughs* I'll just quietly die in the background. Uh what I might do now I'll come- I'll get my voice right, I might throw over to Priya. Priya do you want to take us through that *coughs*

Priya: yeah absolutely, hey kia ora whanau ko Priya toku ingoa, so I'm Priya, customer uh Manager of Customer Insights and Experience and I'm here to share with you an absolutely amazing story uh really good story of collaboration and where we've gone above and beyond or our teams have gone above and beyond to deliver for the customer.

So I was at uh a customer experience conference which is um you know hundreds of uh different customer experience managers and seniors and I was on the table with the head of uh [REDACTED] customer experience and he started telling uh the table that I was sitting at his story about his consent consenting experience and it wasn't good um so he put in a consent in March for some renovations to be done at at his family home um he thought that he'd get it by April. It took way longer for for a few reasons and he he didn't get that til May so it put a bit of a delay and a bit of a spanner in the works for him and his family in terms of the renovation getting started um because there a p- they have to move out of their home and they were really tryna get this done to be back home for Christmas um so anyway they had a bit of a small amendment that they needed to do with this consent as well they had a tree on the property that they were trying to keep there an-and build around that didn't uh work to plan so they they were subsequently were able to go a little extend to their renovations so they put through an amendment and it was at this time that he got in touch with me and said "hey look um is there any way you can you can help out can we, what can we do to get this uh turned around uh because he had concrete uh the concrete guys coming in he had a final inspection by council' so I thought okay well look he's given his current experience with with our consenting process this is our chance to really get in there and and and get something don- delivered for him so that we can turn that experience around so I got in touch with um firstly I got in touch with Andrea Muhme from from Lee Ah Ken's team, the central resource consents team, I could see in SAP that she was uh as uh she was doing a plan check on that uh particular consent. I gave her a call and said "hey look" uh sent her an email and said "hey look is there anything we can do um to to uh look at this enquiry and if you could please keep me updated." Andrea emailed me br-back straight away which was amazing and said "actually I've already approved that, I did that earlier today." Andrea had got the plan check that morning and within 3 hours she was able to check that it get it back to the building consenting team which was fantastic. Um I then knew that it was sitting with the uh pro- ready to go to the inspectors team to to do the next phase of it so I got in touch with Vijaya um from the North West team for building consents um and she got her her guys on to it which is Sanjiv Batta and S- uh sorry If I get your names wrong uh Sohaib Syed who got the picked up the consent and they had it done approved including an RFI within 2 days. That's absolutely amazing so woohoo the the consent was approved, we just had one more hurdle which is now the customer had to be invoiced, it needed to be processed and stamped and out to the customer so that when our inspector went on site they'd have all the documentation and the consent and the the consent or the he could get approval. That was on the 1st of August and the uh concrete guys were coming in on the 2^{ns} of August and his inspection was due on the 1st of August that afternoon. So I contacted Pamela Pam Styles and she got the her team uh on to it and so I'm just gonna do a bit of a shoutout to Nav Jayasinghe, Eric Garzotar, Dawn Lomas and Blanche Savage and Craig Tolson. All of these guys did everything they could so

within a 20 within an 8 hour period these guys had all the documentation ready to be signed off, they emailed it to the customer um they sent it through they Nav also got in touch with Blanche who picked up the phone and and rang the inspector who was on that had already arrived on site and said "hey can you please give the customer 5 more minutes so that they can get their documentation ready." Craig said "yep not a problem." In the end the story was that the consent got im- approved um the the concrete people were able to come in the next day to pour the foundations meaning that this customer's renovation is back on track and he can be back home hopefully by Christmas. So a massive massive shout out to through the collaboration of resource consenting um again I'm just going to mention those names sorry Craig

Craig: No carry on no its good

Priya: Um so there's Andrea Muhme from the central resource consents team, theres Vijaya, Sanjiv Batta, Sohaib Said, uh there's also Pam Styles, Nav Jayasingh, Eric Gazotar, Dawn Lomas, Blanche Savage, and Craig Tolsen, thank you guys so much for getting this across the line. The customer's absolutely thrilled. In fact the the story he's now telling and sharing people is "hey you know what cou- Auckland Council they went above and beyond they all came together to help me out so that me and my whanau can be back by Christmas." *Priya gives thumbs up* Shot team.

Craig: Fantastic thanks uh Priya and look it's a great story and um and I just want to thank everyone involved as well and I want to thank you for picking up the responsibility and owning that situation cause I think that's something that's really really critical, we need to own these issues when they come up um obviously a very influential person out there are uh you know that's not just the reason we do these things um but obviously it's important we get people uh on our side and and that's uh that's fantastic customer service and I think just in term of the building space building consents I just want to flag that they're um currently at 87% of their um processing against 20 stat days at the moment which is an outstanding result-

Priya claps

Craig: - which is the best result we've had in a long time so that sort of service is being delivered um across the business regardless and we're we're hitting you know we're getting closer to our stat requirements so great work team thanks very much um and so much better coming from Priya.

There is another reason I got her here as well actually cause umm I'm going to show you this um *Craig holds up photo*

Priya laughs

Craig: I'm going to show you this. Hopefully got it around the right way, hopefully you can see that. That's Priya and Alan Dalamere for um who's from Alcohol Licensing Inspector

Priya laughs

Craig: umm they got married about a month ago in Fiji so congratulations that

Priya: thank you

Craig: we'll show you that again cos those colours and that the costumes and the outfit is just outstanding so uh if you see Priya and Alan in the ah corridors ah wish them well um but yeah, great to have you here, so thank you for that.

Priya: thank you so much.

Craig: Right. I've got to learn to ah, to breath when I talk obviously but my voice is back to ah back to where it needs to be so we'll pick up on the North Western hub um again um look we got an email through that someone ah is saying that um you know that we're trying to service a very big area from Albany um when you look at the West and the North and ah and you know it does it doesn't make sense um you know we were going to add traffic into Albany and creating um problems generally you know we've got a train outside the Henderson service center um you know why are we not continuing to operate from there? I guess there's a there's a couple of reasons. One is that we want to optimize our where our staff are. We want to make sure that we are working in buildings that are fit for purpose and um and try and get into fewer hubs and rather than a whole lot of different disparate offices. Having said that we will still have the spoke offices like as I say Henderson will still be there and staff will still be able to work from there um there is no doubt that parking and transport and so on is an issue and you know I guess what we are we hoping for is that people will start adopting um public transport perhaps more than they they do currently um it's the only way we are going to get the congestion off uh Auckland roads. It won't suit everyone I understand that and we need to work with people and again and I remind you about flexible working you know if it doesn't suit you you don't have to go to Albany every day then then let's see if we can get you working from home when you know that's uh when you know that's um an obvious opportunity. So um as I say it will it will uh be a little bit challenging for some people I understand that we are not talking um we're not talking about moving until about 2022 we anticipate by the time um we actually um you know finish uh settle on a final site get a um uh get a contract in place with the builder and the building gets build so um that's there's um still a bit of water to flow under the bridge.

Okay, um, carrying on, um I think we, where are we, just in terms of, oh here we are, an email from Sanjay Moza: "congratulations to Priya and team."

Priya: oh!

Craig: Great work. Um right there are a few other things that have come in through the uh 'Contact Craig' and other um things that I just want to jump in on if I may um I just want to uh reinforce Stephen's messages, if you saw his uh his update today, that's come out. First one is around the salary increase that's set for um September, so basically it takes affect from the 1st of September most people should know pretty much by now whether they are getting the 2.2% or not, I mean most of our staff are um you won't actually see the benefit of that until the 26th of September it's a couple of weeks later than we hoped for, normally it would hit immediately after your first pay ah in September um it is actually a couple of uh uh a month pretty much out from that, it will be backdated to the 1st of September so you will get the full amount that you're owed. The reason we have um just delayed it a couple weeks in the pay is that we just need to get the final system improvements made around the Holidays Act program um so we would rather get it right ah than have a problem later on. So

as I say, you will still get the full amount that is owed to you backdated to the 1st of September but you actually won't see it in your pay packet until the 26th of September.

Um I just want to recognize also um as Stephen did, Ian McCormack's appointment as the Chair of the Building Research Advisory Council um that's a real feather in Ian's cap um gives you an idea on the status that he is uh held in umm that that's uh that group is made up of representatives of key building industry organisations and professional affiliations um and and they basically come together to sort out issues um give industry feedback and so and so, as I say Ian being named as Chair of that group is a real feather in his cap.

Um, email from Simon Tredgett uh in Graham Street, this is appropriate to uh Graham Street particularly uh first uh thing to remind you of is the car parking and again we talked about that in the North Western hub it's always a sensitive issue um if we could make sure that we don't um park our personal vehicle in the um in the visitor parking at Graham Street um unfortunately it does clog um that carpark up for our for our customers um we certainly don't want you to be towed from there either so if you bear that in mind and just um when we bring people into into Graham Street, if we can make sure everyone signs in downstairs and if we could also take our visitors back and sign out with them as well. Just make sure that uh we don't have people wandering around the building who don't um you know who who we don't know or we don't really know where they are going. We had someone the other day that apparently arrive in the Police um area in alcohol licensing sort of unannounced which took the Police by surprise so you know again if we can just bear that in mind make sure if you are if you do have guests greet them, um stay with them, and and see them off the premises. It is probably a good time to remind people about the ah IDs as well *shows ID card to camera* well done Priya *Craig laughs* we are all meant to have these now and again it's not about Big Brother it's just about we know that people are in the buildings do work for Council the they are meant to be there so if you haven't got your your ID by now if you could get that it would ah would be fantastic.

Priya: Just remind your customers or your if your people your visitors to sign in downstairs that at level 1 on Graham Street otherwise the car could get towed, so.

Craig: Thanks Priya. Well done. Um another Contact Craig email from Zhivan Alach in SSI um Elena Mika um have I got that right? Elena? Elena Mika um from SSI was part of the Samoan team for the uh the women's volleyball at the recent South Pacific games and ended up coming back with a Bronze medal so

Priya: *claps* yay!

Craig: Fantastic Elena, great uh result, well done. Look forward to you wearing the medal around the office.

Email from um Denise Pieters um and this was a thank you from Janet Larsen a Barking Advisor in the specialist team from Animal Management um basically she uh she followed up on a recent barking complaint um the customer said that it was the most pleasing to get compliments uh sorry complaints resolved quickly and with the

follow up afterwards so ah Janet kept her in the loop and told her what was happening. So great work Janet. Well done.

Richard Kaggwa's sent us an email congratulate-congratulating Ronald Bate and Raffa Rawof uh both Senior-Senior Building Surveyors for work that they did recently on the Cue Haven viewing platform um people at Cue Haven came back with glowing compliments-

Priya: nice

Craig: - around the quality of the service and getting a consent through um you know and a real easy easy way so uh great work Ronald and Raffa

And the last one I have here if there is nothing else coming through and we'll have a look at the um we'll have a look at the uh inbox in a minute um this is a uh uh a letter which we quite often don't get the compliments and this one went directly to the Mayor Phil Goff from Housing NZ and I'm going to read it to you *coughs* if I can, um

Dear Mayor Goff,

Thank you for helping Housing NZ achieve our-our targets. I am writing to thank you for your organisation's contrib-contributions to help Housing NZ and its build partners complete construction of over 1461 new homes in the 2018/19 financial year. That's 1461 new homes, that pretty impressive. Council's building consenting and regulatory team partnered with us to enable the completion of the most homes we've built in decades. With around 60 sorry 80 % of our developments in Auckland. We have annual targets to meet and had to complete more than 600 homes in June to achieve them. The council were very professional and organized to ensure so many homes received their Code of Compliance certifi-certification in that month. This build programme has many more years to run and we look forward to working with the council as we deliver more homes for Aucklanders.

And that is signed by Andrew Mckenzie, the Chief Executive of Housing NZ. So, outstanding work team and nice to see it being recognized.

Alright that's pretty much it. There is another um email in the Contact Craig or on the uh on the text box here um "you can't get from Henderson to Albany on a direct route". And look yeah, I certainly understand again that whole transport issue or link is an issue and the fact that now there isn't a lot available at the moment. We are working with AT to try and see if we can get, with the number of staff we will have coming into Albany to see if we can get better transport routes uh in place. There is the um North Western link that is being completed as well which is uh the road that runs up the highway that runs across the upper harbor and into Albany and that will be um will be sorted out I think in the next year or two as well um but yes certainly take the point about um trying to get to Albany it's important that we do get transport links in so as I say Council are working with AT to see to make sure that we can get that sorted as as best we can.

Umm and another question "did anyone in the team deciding on the hub location actually try and take public transport from Henderson to Albany or vice versa?" So again, I think the same point, we know it's difficult at the moment um we believe it's a lot more difficult trying to get to Henderson and I appreciate the train is in place but if

you're trying to get to uh to to the um other offices we believe it's easier um through Albany, through the North um Northern Express and to Britomart back out again to the West and then hopefully links again across the top of the upper harbor in time as well. But yeah look your points are well made um we did spend a lot of time, believe me um debating and um trying to determine where the best location was and I guess it's one of those scenarios where nothing is ever going to be perfect umm but we believe Albany is going to give us the best solution at this stage.

So hopefully that address the issues team. Um keep the um contacts coming through Contact Craig uh Priya, fantastic to have you here.

Priya: Thanks

Craig: I don't know why you were nervous you did fantastic we will have to get you in here more often. Um have a great weekend everyone. Stay safe and we'll talk to you next week.

Priya: *waves* Ka kite

Craig *waves* Ka kite, bye

ENDS

Transcript: Director's Chat 16 August 2019

Craig: Kia ora team great to be here again today for a Director's for this week's Director's Chat.

I do have a uh guest again that's uh Lindie Du Toit our Health Safety and Wellness Manager um ah Lin-Lindie great to have you along and just before I uh pass over to you um cause I'm keen for you to tell us uh what you're doing and what the plans are going forward

Um but I'd just wanna wanna flag that I caught up with Christo Van der Merwe yesterday for lunch umm Christo won the prize for you the challenge you put out about a great health and safety wellness umm initiative which is good you can talk about that in a minute, but it was great to catch up with Christo umm and and just get to know him a little bit better. I-I found he's a chili affi-afficianado umm makes chili sauce so if anyone's into that you need to get alongside um Christo and understand how it all works because it was was really interesting.

But anyway um having said that it's a- I think the idea that he came up with was fantastic in terms of engaging staff in health and safety and um so I'll hand over to you and let you tell us a little more about what's going on and and what Christo came up with.

Lindie: Um thank you for that I'm glad to be here.

Hi everyone before I start talking about health and safety I think it's important for me to say thank you to the whole of reg services for w-when someone see me they just come and talk, their ideas, the involvement, the first aid room, um the building um health and safety wardens everyone that just wants to be part of that this includes Henderson and the Orewa teams as well but next week I will be around in Manukau but I need to say thank you for embracing health and safety and for how you just wanna be involved.

Christo came up with a brilliant idea and as we have said we are going to incorporate that within our health and safety work that we do across regulatory services. And what he has identified is that when we have incidents, we don't look at the investigation quick enough and the control measures and the implementation of that that we can roll out across reg services. And Christo's idea was the composition of an investigation team that can support the manger into that investigation. That's going give us um clear outcomes but it's also going provide the employees involved that we're going to do everything from now on to make sure we look after them and we wanna keep them safe um Christo's idea will now be shared via an email to the whole of reg services with an outline and you are welcome to provide feedback on that umm also keep an eye open for the next competition that's coming up with-

Craig: *Laughing* Hopefully not lunch with me again I hope, some-something better than that - not that I mind having lunch

Lindie: *laughs* I think that it's good that we keep this momentum now going because this creates a positive workplace and that's our ultimate goal above everything is that we wanna be a positive engaging work force

Craig: Perfect.

Lindie: This also now lead into our bit of a feedback for you on what health and safety at reg services is about and our vision for that is very simple, it is a shared value for all of us within reg services and our shared value is we want people to be safe but we want them to be happy and we want them to engage at all levels within the business and that's so simple that we're going to do that, we're going to build our framework on three pillars, we're going to use the three R's, sorry the South African accent

Craig and Lindie: *laughing*

Lindie: We roll our R's, it is the three R's and one is our risks. We know our risks within our business and you as a team, you know exactly what you deal with on a daily basis but it's important that we understand what we deal with but it's even more important that we make sure that we reduce those risks by bringing the control measures up to date, that we review that and that we talk about it and that it's not a document that has been stashed away on a shared drive and only will go out once a year and shared via emails. What we really looked into is what are we doing, are there some different things that we can do to make it safe. We're going to look at our relationships and that's the engagement - how do we talk to each other about health and safety? Do we make it a stand-alone topic or do we integrate that and weave it like a basket? You know health and safety should be one of those things that we weave into this basket and make it everything that we do include component of health and safety. And then we're going to look at the resources, and the first thing that people always say to me is that we need to look at training, we need to spend a lot of money. But did you know the amount of resources that we have available are actually quite simple we have a lot of specialists working with services, they have skills, they have knowledge and we should go and talk to them and start using our resources to our advantage. But we also have brilliant websites and that includes Worksafe New Zealand, that include the Mental Health Foundation and we should start resou- look at that and what can we use of that um

Our goals to reach these three pillars are quite simple. We're going to do a whole review of the current risks within reg services, what do we have currently? Are those still the critical risks? And critical risks are those things really going to hurt our staff and that's a worry for us, we don't want those phone calls that someone has been hurt but equally we don't wanna make those ph-phone calls or those visits to our families to say "someone has been hurt" and that's why we need to start looking at those critical risks. Then we're going to start monitoring that by having these chats in our team meetings about those risks and how can you help you are the people on the forefront that's doing the work so I need to have the involvement and engagement from you to tell us how we can start looking at that. We need to look at our investigations, we need to provide more feedback to our staff, but we also need to look at how we investigate it. Are there some clear outcomes? And do we integrate that back into the risk managements? And that's going to make sure we have a good health and safety management system, but it's also going to make sure that we can show the rest of Auckland Council safety is just how we do our things within reg services and that they can learn from us. And then least ooh the most important thing for me, thing that we're going to look at is our wellbeing of our staff. A lot of you

would've seen the changes within the first aid room, we're starting to make a space where you can go and have your uh quiet time. It's also a place where you can make use of the opportunities to throw in EAP in a quiet space where you would not be bothered. But it's also a space where you can recover for a couple of minutes and then go on with your work and feel that you have a space that's a bit more up to date and refreshed with information. The mental health awareness week this year has been set for the 23rd-29th of September. Now I would like to encourage the whole of regulatory services to book half an hour within your calendar within that week and spend some time with your teams, whether you go for a coffee, whether you go for a walk along the water, whether you just have sometime out and just ask each other "how are you?" I don't want you to use that half an hour to talk about work, I want you to focus on each other and just ask each other "how are you?" I want you to send us some pictures of that activity so that we can share this, how are we starting to look after each other because that's the key foundation of health and safety, if we look after each other and we look out for our mates we would pick up if there's something wrong within our risk management. And that's a key key focus and the I'll share something with you: Monday morning I decided to take the courage and sent a bit of a told off email to the general managers

Craig: And the director!

Lindie: And the director, and I told them off for not setting the example in terms of long working hours, for making sure that we ask our staff how they are and I have told them that we need to set the example across the whole of reg services, in terms of sending emails at midnight. Like c'mon, who sh-sends emails at midnight? We should park those emails and we should do that the next day, and when we start doing that we can make sure that we create a health work-life balance and that's my challenge to all of you also is to make sure that we think about the rest of our staff when we send it because a ripple effect usually takes place doesn't it? When someone sends an email, we wanna respond so if we don't send it after work we have no emails to respond to. So anything else that you can think of that you would like to include in that, I'm everywhere I'm a phone call away just come grab me and we can have health and safety chats.

Craig: Thanks Lindie. Brilliant and um yea I mean th-the challenge laid down is is is a good one we do work long hours a-and I guess part of the message is that I would certainly some people work flexible hours and uh therefore it works for them to send emails in the evening and so on but there's no obligation for people to respond um unless there's a life or death situation

Lindie: Yes

Craig: Uh so I think that's really critical umm just in terms of using the the resources available to us and the tools I think to an extent two of the most critical ones are these *points at eyes* and this *points at head* um w-w-we're all responsible aren't we um you know for um looking after ourselves and for everyone else and as you said we really wanna make that a part of our normal culture. It is something that we're looking at within our our business planning that we're doing currently um around you know our people i-is a critical component of what we do um and making

sure that they are safe and well and healthy i-is is a part of that and so it' all coming together I think

Lindie: Yes

Craig: But there's a lot of work to do. Um in terms of the mental health um week I'm really keen to support the idea around the the half- what was it half an hour or whatever I think that's a great idea, um having said that i-in terms of mental health I am going to hold you up here around my mental health, cause the first thing Lindie did when she sat down here was talk about the rugby and that isn't good for my mental health at all, so um I'll just share that.

Lindie: *laughs*

Craig: So thanks Lindie. Um look well carrying on um in terms of um where we go from here um just a- eh quick uh heads up on the business planning we have um jumped into or pushed the go on sorting out our lodgement process, uh resource consents building control are in the main, we have found, I might have shared this with you before through our uh process mapping that we-it takes around about on average 13 days and I know there's always some contentious-contention around numbers but um that's pretty much where we're at in terms of um getting to process an application at the moment which is a is a real issue obviously for our customers and uh hitting our uh time frames that we want to work to. Um so lodgment is an area that we're diving into immediately. There is a team being set up um they have started to do more work around um just investigating the issues our subject matter experts will be pulled into that. That will put some stress on um the organization a little bit in terms of you know resource consents and building control and what they're doing because we are taking people out of the business but I'm quite comfortable slowing things down if it means we're gonna go a lot faster because we've got a much better process um and system at the end of it. Um part of that too I just wanna again make the the point that what we're doing is about trying to make life easier for our customers and for our staff um there's no other reason for doing this other than that, that's the key the key focus um so we are gonna push um ahead pretty quickly with that. RFI's will be another area that we'll be looking at shortly as well as um data integrity and invoicing and billing. So we've kicked off um I know there is still work on the uh Operation Springfield which is about sorting out SAP to support our people and getting the right hardware in place that can support our systems, so that's uh that's an ongoing piece of work as well. So again we are listening and we are working um through that.

Just in terms of timeframes a-and I'm probably gonna get a little contentious now and um and I'm happy to be held to account, and I and I was held to account um an individual emailed me and I apologise if they're listening that I haven't responded via the email I will do that I will follow up. But I am going to address it now I got an email from someone who took issue with the um piece last week where we had Priya in the room and we talked about how Priya got involved in and uh grabbed a a customer issue and owned it and sorted it out and prioritized it. The person took issue- and I'm sure they're not the only one out there who who has this um this thought that you know ethically and integrity is that the right thing to do. Yea yea uh should we um should we be prioritizing some people because of who they are or what they are or the noise they can make um yeah surely we should try treat every applicant as as

equal. I'm gonna be a little bit contentious here because I think reality, it's great to be black and white but there's shades of grey in this, and I think we will always have situations where things are inflated and we'll treat those on their merits so the the situation that Priya talked about was a bank um [REDACTED] uh Manager of Customer Engagement, someone who's quite high profile, I did reflect on the fact that I did probably make a mistake by saying he was someone we wanted to keep on side because that does identify that I've got more of a concern about our reputation than anything else so I take that on the chin but I think reality is we will look at different applications and consents and so on in different ways depending on the urgency, depending on the on the person sometimes we're currently working with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] consent around a house, well are we not gonna you know consider that a little bit differently to some others? I think reality is that we will do that, whether we like that or not I think that's reality. I think the the key thing for me in all of this is that we shouldn't get to a situation where we have customers complaining to us, cause we have a lot of customers unhappy with the way we we do things and I think there's two components of that. One is we need to be educating our customers a lot better about the expectations of what we want from them, so we're not having to deal with shonky consent applications umm but but also I think that we do need to get our processes and our systems right so we can get to these things on time so we're not having to prioritise some over over the others, we're meeting our customers' expectations um I think another point I would make is that some of our customers actually don't worry too much about um time. I mean it's not you know they they aren't bound by time. We are because we have a statutory obligation umm so we need to be very aware of that as well some we can push out a little bit and prioritize others so I-I take on board um the individual I really respect the fact the individual emailed me, I'm I'm I'm really appreciative of that because I want to hear people's concerns I am gonna push back a little bit on this one and say while I accept my language perhaps wasn't quite right I think we will get into situations where we do need to prioritize some ahead of others. And we do have a reputation risk, we do have a um a a moral risk risks and ethical risks that we have to consider as well, so I take all that on board.

Um the other thing um that I do want to um address and again a little bit contentious is having sat through um an evening meeting the other day – working outside of hours Lindie – with the Property Council, um and also having gone to Watercare today and sat down and talked to their key people, there is an element of frustration and and let me couch this in terms of saying that 95 or 90% of what we do is really appreciated and we do a great job but there are always those occasions where we seem to be quite inconsistent in our decisions for some reason or another, and I think that something that's really occurred to me in recent times is you know what is the message we're sending to staff? What is what is our responsibility as a regulator? What are we looking to achieve? And you know at the moment we're at a high growth stage our council's pushing us to empower or to to to get this city up to speed um and therefore does that take precedent or weight carry a bit more weight over other aspects of of our decision making. I think we need to be clear about that as an as a regulatory services directorate and I'm looking to clarify that with the lead team and with our staff so we can give some really clear direction that this is where our weighting has to be now that's not to say if it is around stimulating growth that we

ignore the environment or we ignore safety or anything else like that, they all come into the equation but where do we put our our weight. So uh I think it's really really important we we get that and we start thinking about that and where I am gonna be contentious, that might be contentious, but where I am also gonna get contentious is I think that sometimes when you sit in a role and all of a sudden you find that your values perhaps don't align with where the organization is then that can be an awkward position to be in and we need to be sure that we are trying to align values as best we can, I think both from an organization perspective with our with the majority of our staff but also as an individual staff member around: do my values align with the organization? And that can be a a tough conversation sometimes but it's a conversation we need to consider or think we need to consider and maybe a conversation we need to have with our our managers. So um as I say a little bit contentious um but really really important we are all on the same page, we're heading in the same direction, we are being consistent in in our approach as best we can.

Okay um just a final finish off um what have we go uh question from Simon Tredgett, it's not a question it's a statement: "great stuff Lindie, we also need to celebrate and recognize great health, safety and wellness behaviours that we see in our people." I couldn't agree more Simon um fantastic you know, I think that that applies not just to health, safety and wellness, we need to recognize our people when they do great work anyway uh we need to celebrate success and we need to give people a pat on the back, sometimes it's easy to forget, just move on to the next thing so well done Simon, I love it.

Um another question I "I question whether this new way of working, moving to hubs and spokes and working from home or other offices will actually go against a happy and engaged team. What's wrong with everybody having an office space (one big building) together to share issues we experience, share ideas, be part of a team, but these big buildings need to be in the four areas – North, West, Central and South." Um yeah look really good point I think we need to and this is one of the challenges when you have you know in the reg-regulatory services we have around about 1600 staff members um we all like well not all we all have different ways of working and like different flexibility options, I think it is important we do bring the teams together um to engage and to have those conversations um we're living in a world that's getting more and more disconnected because we tend to be doing things electronically, so I personally am a big fan of having people in the same spot - not all the time because I don't think that's necessary - but I think we do need to bring people together so we do get consistency in our messaging and and have the opportunity to share ideas and engage so really good point um we are looking for 4 big offices um obviously uh in the um North-West, we've had a little bit of dialogue about that in the last week, Manukau obviously, um Central – Bledisloe and and Albert Street, um so yeah those 4 buildings are our are our key buildings but also again making sure that we do have accessibility to offices that are a bit more outlying so people can work from there when it suits those circumstances, but it's a good point, um

The last thing I'm just gonna share is an email um that came in from Paul Radich and this is a real again another pat on the back um Paul Radich is a he I think he used to

work for council actually, but he's now the National Alcohol Responsibility Manager for Woolworths – Alcohol Responsibility Manager, I wouldn't mind being responsible for alcohol, but that's another, that's another story *laughs* but anyway Paul has come back to us and sent and basically sent an email saying um that he's uh he really wants to congratulate and thank the North-West alcohol licensing team and the way that they work um he's not detracting from other teams within council but he just finds that dealing with Claire, Mark, Andy and Bryce is uh a great experience, they do a fantastic job, always willing to sit down and chat about matters and in and um come to a you know a really good conclusion working collaboratively so well done team, great to get that sort of feedback it's um again it's real good customer service and I really do appreciate your work.

So I don't think we've got any other messages –

Patricia: yes we do

Craig: oh we do sorry, Patricia's just sending through another

Patricia: um it's from *inaudible*

Craig: another message. This is a long Director's Chat today, hopefully people are still engaged

Patricia: did it come up?

Craig: *coughs* oh! "Craig it's called building consents and no longer known as building control" *laughs* well done, yep thank you I stand corrected um I need to update my all the uh stuff in my PD obviously as well but um *laughs*

Um "thank you for your clarification around last week's comments, glad to know it's not who you know that makes a difference on how fast your consent is processed, I guess it is true that the squeaky wheel does get the oil." And yes it does and ya know we've talked before about uh we get some people who are connected into the Mayor or the CEO um and you know and when we get those requests well we do have to respond whether we like it or not, but it but it it's a reality of the world that we live in I'm afraid um and that's not to say that as I said earlier on that we shouldn't be trying to deliver superb customer service to the smallest consent um you know from whatever area of Auckland it may be.

Uh one more "Hi Craig, you were not at the North West hub information session today, how do you rate the importance of this for positive, engaging and happy work force?" Um I'll be perfectly honest with you, I didn't know there was a North West hub information session on today um so that hasn't come through on my diary and Patricia's sitting there shrub-shrugging her shoulders as well so um look I apologise I wasn't there um I do see it as a key priority to keep uh our staff happy and I should have been there so I apologise for that. Um again more than happy for anyone to send me an email, pick up the phone, um my number's in the on the intranet um but I will try and get out to uh out that way as well uh as soon as I can and anyone who wants to engage can.

So look thanks team, have a great day um Thursday today, one more day to go and then you can have a couple of days off which is always nice, weekends are always

too short, but um yeah have a great rest of the week and we will uh catch you next week. Cheers.

ENDS

Transcript: Director's Chat 19 September 2019

Craig: Kia ora team how are you all today? Hope you are all having a great day um talking to you today from uh Henderson we're out here today doing our roadshows uh We were at Manukau on uh Tuesday we had 3 great sessions out there with staff and really appreciate those that turned up and uh there's some great questions um little bit of cynicism I guess to uh to in terms of what we're doing but hopefully the message is resonating and certainly staff seemed to be prepared to give us a go and uh and come on the journey with us or at least give us a chance to prove that we are gonna to make a difference to uh giving time back to our teams. So for those of you in uh Henderson this afternoon who perhaps weren't thinking of coming to the roadshow I encourage you to do so um and then we have uh central in Graham St and Orewa uh next week. So look forward to seeing everyone out there.

Well this um directors chat I really just want to um I guess pick up on an issue um that I've been reflecting on over um the last few weeks and I guess it's really around the um conflicts of our desire to do our best for customers or what is our best for customers and our position as a statutory entity with with certain obligations a- when I did a couple of directors chats in the last few weeks I um sorta used examples of what I thought was really positive um customer service um situations where staff uh and I think there's 2 aspects to this the first one is the issue around um around complaints customer complaints and I've used the example where a staff members picked up on some complaints and um I thought owned them and delivered some great service back to the customer. I think that's relevant uh I did make a point around an individual and his status which was was silly um but reality is that every complaint that comes in I would like someone to pick it up and own it and deliver great customer service back to get the um complaint addressed um no preferential treatment to anyone we just address complaints as they come in.

The other aspect though of this is that uh you know around consenting and um applications and how they come in and how we handle those um look those of you who um raised issues and concerns about what I'd said in terms of us prioritizing certain customers I want to thank you uh I think it's great you had the confidence to be able to do that and you are prepared to uh to hold me up and um I guess challenge what I thought um and you know keen to get your concerns addressed. So as a result of the the contact from staff I I sought a bit of guidance from our internal experts at legal and ethics and integrity to find out sort of you know what exactly are our obligations, where should we go with this, what do what do we need to consider um and certainly you know I've been reminded very clearly of the importance of us acting reasonably and transparently um especially in relation to our statutory obligations uh and our regulatory functions. So it's really important obviously we treat everyone fairly as customers regardless of who they are.

Um I thought it would be useful for me to sort of like I guess identify where I was coming from when I made the comment that I think you know we do what when I said we do prioritize our customers differently in some cases I mean this is set out in our in our website for building um consents and it really is around how we put different applications into different streams so our streamline process, our qualified partners, premium, um custom- they are all different ways of working based on the customers

that we are dealing with and in some cases that means the consents won't be dealt with in the order they come in. Having said that again and there is no uh and I wanna stress this there is no um suggestion that we prioritize individuals based on their status or who they are or what they are we don't put um consents ahead of other consents um in our standard operating procedures. As I say have a look at our website it does clarify um how we do handle different consents um and but at the end of the day there are there is no preferential treatment for people um or individuals based on who they are on what they are um so yeah just wanted to really really clarify that.

The only time that we might step outside of that is where we prioritize a consent on compassionate grounds. If someone is going to suffer significant hardship as a result of us not being able to get to their consent early then we will otherwise consider that and look at that but they are very discreet and um unique situations

So um again just to clarify no preferential treatment for individuals other than working through the streams we already have set up um and I apologize if people took that the wrong way when I did um had my directors chats in the past in the past. One of the things that I found interesting with the directors chats is that to me you know it's a conversation it's an opportunity to have a relaxed dialogue with you albeit it is a one way conversation and I appreciate when I say things if I was – you were sitting across the table and you can question it and I can clarify it and give you uh the context that I am thinking about. It's a little bit difficult to do that when you are speaking into uh into a skype um forum but um yeah I'm I'm going to keep thinking about how I do put things so everyone understands what I'm where I'm coming from, the context that I'm uh talking about uh but again I do want to keep these uh these chats um reasonably casual. So hopefully that uh clarifies my position I'm um I'm really keen to keep getting feedback from people I'm really keen for people to challenge what I'm saying to ask questions to uh to give me um give me a serve where you think it's appropriate as well um but yeah look um and again to the individuals who did raise the uh concerns and issues thanks for doing so cause it has given me an opportunity to clarify uh our position in this regard

So that's really all I wanted to talk about in the directors chat this week I see there is a question coming in and that is "With the announcement this week of around 160 staff positions going and the reference to frontline staff not being affected. Can you explain what is meant by frontline staff (is it the whole of regulatory that is not expected to be affected?)" Look a great question and it is one that I am addressing in the directors chats uhm the organization as a whole is not going through a restructure there are certain parts of the business that are looking to optimize how they operate and they are currently working through uhm that those changes with people who are affected. Regulatory Services we are not restructuring um we there are some numbers that are set that we believe are optimum for our different parts of the parts of the organization as a whole. We have a number that we are well below at the moment, we have struggled to find people to fill the positions we have vacant so our we actually have an opportunity to grow our numbers if we can find the right people. What I am what I am saying to GMs is that if we have a position that is vacant then let's consider whether or not we um need to replace that position or uh can we do things smarter or better. And that's part of what our roadshows are about

too talking about how we can give our staff time back, how we can provide better systems, better processes to make life easier for our staff so um we are certainly not looking to to shed staff there will be situations as we go through our business optimization process where we might find that a position the nature of a position may change a little bit and if that's the case we will talk to those individuals and work with them but my focus is about giving our the staff that we currently have getting better staff involved more staff involved to fill the gaps but making our staff more productive giving you the opportunity to uh use your skills and expertise and qualifications in the way that you should be able to rather than having to do a whole lot of admin type work um but yeah so again just to confirm we are not looking to restructure Regulatory Services, we are not looking to get rid of staff as I say there may be changes as we optimize that they will be discreet and we will work on individuals around that. So hopefully that gives you some comfort again um for those who haven't been to the roadshows please come cause then we can have these conversations one on one or in a group forum and I can give you uh some more comfort around that hopefully.

Have we got any more questions Patricia? No it doesn't look like it, bear in mind there is a 30 second delay from uh from what I say now to when you receive it um so anything comes in when I sign off um we'll pick it up next week. But uh team uh thanks very much ka kite have a great afternoon look forward to seeing those at the roadshow that haven't been so far and when we get out to uh Orewa and to uh Graham St. Have a great rest of your day, thanks team bye.