

SE Business
HD **Folks figure Trafigura bods fly in**
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It was the talk of Diggers & Dealers last week when 1943 delegates (official tally, down from 2005 in 2013) descended on Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Upon disembarking at the Goldfields capital's airport, they were greeted by a 2009 Bombardier Global 5000 already on the tarmac.

It sparked wild speculation about which rich geezer was in town, or whether the US-registered jet was simply the chosen mode of transport for the Palace Hotel bar staff flown in for the four nights of festivities.

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Turns out the Bombardier's presence was merely a Diggers coincidence. All fingers are pointing to Trafigura flying some of its smartest brains to the Goldfields as part of its due diligence of BHP Billiton's Nickel West operation.

The Dutch trading giant is considered one of the likely bidders for Nickel West and interested particularly in the processing side, which comprises the Kalgoorlie smelter, Kambalda concentrator and Kwinana refinery.

IN THE GARDEN

As far as official secrets go, Lyndon Rowe's appointment as Synergy chairman was a pretty well-kept one.

Speculation began swirling on Monday night and one wonders if yesterday's announcement by the Government was rushed forward after this paper's operatives started calling Rowe to find out if he was about to quit his full-time role at the Economic Regulation Authority, for which he was paid between \$570,000 and \$580,000 in 2012-13 according to the ERA's most recent annual report.

Turns out Rowe has been on gardening leave for several weeks since he was first approached by **Energy** Minister Mike Nahan about the Synergy gig.

Rowe's successor at the ERA remains unclear. His fellow governing members, consultant economist Steve Edwell and Monash University economics professor Stephen King, will stay in their part-time roles, which come with a \$150,000 to \$160,000 purse. It remains to be seen whether ERA CEO Greg Watkinson, on \$340,000 to \$350,000, will take some of the limelight for so long occupied by Rowe.

RICE AND BARLEY

Anyone worried about the whereabouts of the CBH board, shouldn't be.

They are throwing themselves bare feet and all into a 10-day tour of Asia aimed at connecting with customers in Japan, **China** and Indonesia.

And directors and senior management were well looked after by their hosts in Japan if the board's blog spot is anything to go by.

It describes how the directors met on the top floor of their hotel in Takamatsu to experience an onsen, a communal bath, on Saturday night. They were served a traditional dinner before doing their bit to boost barley sales by drinking shochu. The directors then retired in pairs to share twin platform beds for the night. Who says they don't get along?

The 12-member board, minus Samantha Tough , departed Perth last week following the decision not to proceed with a big investment in supply chain infrastructure in the Eastern States.

IRON AZURI

An interesting post-script to Monday's news that BC **iron** had struck a friendly \$250 **million** takeover of Kerry Stokes' **Iron Ore** Holdings .

It proved that BC boss Morgan Ball is not letting the defection of the **iron ore** miner's unofficial ambassador Nick "the honey badger" Cummins from the Western Force to Japan affect his corporate thinking. It also cemented Azure Capital as a key player in WA's **iron ore** space. Geoff Rasmussen and Matt Weaver advised BC on the takeover, their second **iron ore** tilt in as many months, but will hope for a better outcome this time after failing to help Mineral Resources nail the \$1.5 **billion** Aquila .

IOH's adviser is ANZ .

NOMAD SHADOW

Nomad Building Solutions is proving itself once again to be the incredible shrinking **company**.

Having shed its one-time flagship donga-making business over the past few years and slashed overheads, the pre-GFC high flyer has gone a step further.

Chief executive Andrew Sturcke , who was also chief financial officer, will be stepping down in November. He won't be replaced.

All that's left of Nomad is modular builder McGrath Homes , a Karratha accommodation village and surplus property assets that are for **sale**. The group's financial function will be integrated into McGrath, whose boss Errol Davies becomes Nomad's most senior executive. Sturcke will, however, have a continuing role as a non-executive director on Nomad's three-man board.

NOT ON FIRE

The advent of new technology has caused a lot of changes in the corporate world: smartphones, tablets, LinkedIn, voyeuristically exploring colleagues' Facebook accounts — the list goes on. Yet it's video conference calling which has really made a big difference.

Yesterday, Cisco held an "internet of things" event at its Perth digs, connecting about 10 offices from around Australia and New Zealand.

In what looked like something out of the Starship Enterprise, three humongous screens connected the Bull's tech gun, iiNet's Greg Bader and guests to other participants in galaxies far far away. Other than freaking out our operative — and catching him unashamedly and repeatedly "exploring" his left nostril — the technology created a seamless way of hosting a discussion event, without the airline bill.

Then, smack bang into one of the presentations, the evacuation alarm in Perth reverberated around the country, care of the world-wide interwebs, causing a short delay in proceedings.

For the record, the unexpected testing of the alarm system at 167 St Georges Terrace worked really, really well.

With Nick Sas, Brad

Thompson and Peter Williams

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