



Fortescue names exec to drive unit

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Body

Fortescue has appointed a new chief executive to run what was known as Williams Advanced Engineering in the latest leadership shake-up in the company's green energy division.

Ellie Coates will be in the driver's seat at **Fortescue** Zero Power Systems, a business that started life as an offshoot of the Williams F1 racing team and was acquired for \$US222m in 2022.

She will become the third chief executive at the UK-based business in the past six months and steps into the role post a major **Fortescue** reset that saw the company slash 700 jobs and slow its push into green hydrogen. The business is tasked with adapting the technology applied in racing electric cars in Formula E to moving big volumes of iron ore using haul trucks under **Fortescue**'s goal to eradicate greenhouse gas emissions in its mining operations.

Fortescue executive chairman Andrew Forrest doubled down on his commitment to stop using diesel in the company's mining operation by 2030 at the weekend by backing a proposed fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. Ms Coates will report to **Fortescue** energy boss Mark Hutchinson, who stepped in to run **Fortescue** Zero after the sudden departure of Judith Judson in June.

A separate business within the energy division - **Fortescue** Zero Hydrogen Systems - is run by Cameron Smith, who also reports to Mr Hutchinson.

The work done by **Fortescue** Zero Power Systems is integral to **Fortescue**'s \$US2.8bn (\$4.3bn) partnership with Europe-based Liebherr to jointly develop zero emission mining machinery -solutions.

Fortescue expects to purchase about 360 autonomous battery electric trucks, 55 electric excavators and 60 battery powered dozers under the deal.

Liebherr's role is to provide the chassis while the battery power systems will be supplied by **Fortescue** Zero.

Ms Coates, previously **Fortescue**'s executive director of strategy and innovation, will move from Perth to the UK in her new role.

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A **Fortescue** spokesman said Mr Hutchinson would remain chief executive of the **Fortescue** energy division.

The \$US2.8bn figure on the Liebherr partnership represents the cost to the **Fortescue** mining division of buying trucks and other machinery.

Mr Hutchinson recently told analysts **Fortescue** Zero would capture some of the revenue from the sales. "We just have to remember that a big part of that flows back to **Fortescue** Zero because a big part of the trucks is the power system," he said.

Ms Judson was appointed chief executive of **Fortescue** Zero in 2023 as it opened two new -facilities in the UK and foreshadowed a recruitment drive. She lasted less than a year before returning to her home in the US.

Fortescue has budgeted \$US6.2bn to achieve a switch to renewable energy to decarbonise its iron ore operations by 2030. Dr Forrest described the company as one of Australia's biggest greenhouse gas polluters at the weekend, but said it could convert the burning of one billion litres of diesel equivalent a year into "long-term profitable green energy assets" by 2030.

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