

Speech to Leadership Matters

Grand Ballroom, Crown Perth
Thursday 1 October 2026

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Introduction

Good morning.

And thank you Harlene for that warm welcome.

I join Harlene in acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Thank you to Seven West Media for hosting us.

And thank you to everyone who has joined us here this morning.

It's wonderful to see so many familiar faces in the room, including from Woodside's valued community partners such as the WA Museum, Surf Life Saving WA and the Fremantle Dockers.

Speaking of Freo, what an incredible season.

One that – despite the final score on Saturday - brought so much joy to supporters across WA.

Dockers CEO Simon Garlick is here this morning, and I want to congratulate him and the entire club on their outstanding achievements in 2026.

Well done Simon.

Since moving to Perth three years ago to join Woodside, I've been welcomed so warmly by the local community.

From industry peers in Perth to Traditional Owners in the Pilbara.

It's reinforced what I already knew – that Woodside has strong and enduring relationships with organisations across the state, built through more than 40 years of operations here.

It is a real honour to be leading a company that is such a part of WA's story.

So this morning I'd like to share a little about the leadership journey that brought me here.

And discuss a question I've been thinking a lot about recently.

What does an increasingly volatile world mean for Western Australia, and for companies like ours who call it home?

Because while there's plenty of uncertainty right now, there's also a great deal of opportunity.

And very few places in the world are better positioned to seize it than WA.

Influences and perspective on leadership

I grew up in inner-city Melbourne, but I was always drawn to regional Australia.

I had friends and relatives on farms and looked for any excuse to visit them.

The summer before I finished school, I worked on a cattle property in Queensland, near Toowoomba.

I loved the sense of community.

Everyone worked hard and socialised together.

The farm also offered plenty of opportunities for problem-solving, which suited the engineer-in-waiting in me.

But the most important lesson came after a major flood destroyed fences across the district.

Rather than each farmer rebuilding alone, local community members stepped up and showed real leadership, organising people to go from property to property, helping each other until every fence was repaired.

No one was left behind.

That experience taught me something I have carried throughout my career.

People can achieve extraordinary things when they come together around a shared challenge and a common purpose.

And when they have courageous leaders.

Leadership matters, especially in times of uncertainty.

Later, as an engineer, I discovered that while I enjoyed solving technical problems, I enjoyed working with people even more.

So I sought out leadership opportunities.

Work has always been important to me, but it's never been the only thing that matters.

I had my two daughters during the first decade of my career, so like many people, I've spent much of my professional life balancing work and family.

When I started in the oil and gas industry there were few female leaders.

So as a leader, I've aimed to show other women what's possible.

That you can build a successful career in our industry.

That family and leadership can be compatible.

After more than 30 years in the industry, I've come to believe that good leadership is about creating the conditions for others to succeed.

It means building psychologically safe teams, where people feel safe to speak up and constructively challenge.

Setting clear expectations and accountabilities.

Giving people the confidence to adapt when circumstances change.

And helping them understand the bigger picture.

And today the bigger picture matters more than ever.

A changing world

A key part of my role is meeting with customers, governments and investors in Australia and across the globe.

And the conversations we're having today are quite different to those we were having five years ago.

With the predictable global order under threat, and energy shocks travelling from the Middle East to petrol bowers here in Perth, there is a much stronger focus on security.

Economic security.

National security.

Energy security.

Increasingly, people understand they're connected.

Reliable and affordable energy underpins prosperity.

It supports economic growth and the quality of life we often take for granted in a place like WA.

It supports the food on our tables.

The medicines in our cabinets.

The phones in our pockets.

The International Energy Agency has declared the current global energy crisis, caused by conflict in Middle East, the worst in history.

So it's understandable that countries across our region are thinking carefully about who they partner with, and whether they can rely on those partnerships for the long term.

The focus is no longer on securing the cheapest LNG cargo.

It's on securing the most reliable one.

For places that can provide reliable and stable energy, that's creating opportunity.

As well as abundant resources, WA also has world-leading expertise.

Strong relationships.

And a long track record of being a trusted and reliable partner.

In fact, if WA were a country - and I know some of you wish it were - it would be the world's second's largest LNG exporter in 2026, with only the US ahead of it.

Last year, about one in 10 LNG cargoes on the world's oceans at any time departed from WA.

For such a small part of the world's population, we make an outsized contribution to global energy security.

On top of this, customer countries are continuing to pursue decarbonisation goals.

And that's also good news for Western Australia.

Because we have abundant natural gas which, when used to generate electricity, can generally offer materially lower life-cycle emissions to coal.

With 20 percent of global LNG supply withdrawn from global markets as a result of the Middle East conflict, energy utilities in countries like Japan, Korea and Thailand are reverting to higher-emitting coal for power.

This is where LNG from WA can play such an important role.

For example, Woodside has a long-term contract with a major gas provider in South Korea, which plans to use our LNG in place of coal at a large power plant in the city of Ulsan – the industrial powerhouse of the country.

WA's next chapter

WA's contribution to energy security and decarbonisation goals in Asia is not an entirely new story.

We have been meeting the energy needs of our region for decades.

More than 40 years ago, leaders in industry and government backed the North West Shelf Project.

It was a bold decision.

And it helped transform this state.

The North West Shelf provided a reliable new source of energy for WA homes and businesses.

Keeping the lights on and supporting industrial development.

Powering the growth of our world-leading mining sector, which supports so many jobs and communities across the state.

With the support of Japanese customers and investors it also created a major new export industry.

One that now accounts for 10% of Australia's entire export income.

The image on the screen is the Northwest Sanderling leaving Karratha in 1989 with the very first shipment of LNG from Australia to Japan.

The North West Shelf established Australia's reputation as a trusted energy supplier to our region.

That legacy continues today.

More than 35 years of LNG exports has strengthened the economic and strategic relationships we've built with customer countries in Asia.

The value of these relationships has been demonstrated during the current energy crisis.

Australia's role as a reliable LNG supplier has been used to secure critical supplies of products we need here, like refined petrol.

The crisis has also underlined why strong, long-term demand remains for the energy Western Australia can provide.

This brings me to our Scarborough Energy Project.

Scarborough and opportunity

There's a real sense of excitement across Woodside right now as we target first LNG from Scarborough before the end of this year.

Many people have devoted years of work to this project.

Seeing the finish line now within reach is incredible.

It's estimated the Scarborough field, located 375 kilometres off the Pilbara coast, contains enough energy to power the homes in ten cities the size of Perth for around 30 years.

It will help maintain Western Australia's role as a leading energy supplier to our region.

And it will bring significant new gas supply into the domestic market.

For example, Scarborough will supply feedstock gas to the new Perdaman urea plant in the Pilbara.

The plant is set to supply much-needed fertiliser for farmers in Australia and overseas.

Building on success

Looking beyond this decade, WA's energy system is entering a significant period of change.

Coal-fired power stations are expected to retire, as renewable generation expands.

During this period, the state will continue to need reliable and affordable energy.

Backing up renewables-led grids when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, with battery storage and gas, will be critical.

To do this, we'll need to develop new gas resources that are ready to enter WA's energy system in the 2030s, like Browse.

As Australia's largest undeveloped gas resource, Browse has the potential to deliver major economic and strategic benefits to WA.

It could help realise the sovereign capability ambitions in the Federal Government's 'Future Made in Australia' policy, and the State Government's 'Made in WA' agenda.

For example, it could provide energy to support critical minerals processing and other industrial activities that require high-temperature heat.

Browse also has the potential to supply reliable energy for WA's expanding defence manufacturing and shipbuilding industries.

And it could provide flexible 24/7 power needed for data centres.

Browse can also help continue Karratha's role as a national economic powerhouse.

With the original North West Shelf fields now in decline, Browse can provide a new source of gas for the Karratha Gas Plant.

Extending the life of this facility and the many local businesses and jobs it supports.

And that part's crucial for me.

Major projects like the North West Shelf and Scarborough don't only unlock WA's resources.

They can empower our regions to play their part in WA's success story.

That's what strikes me when I visit Karratha.

Families building their lives and young people seeing opportunities to build careers closer to home.

Like the first-year Programmed apprentices training at Woodside's Karratha facilities.

Local businesses growing - like Winyama Contracting Group, a Karratha-based, Traditional Owner business who carried out modifications on our Pluto LNG plant in preparation for it to receive gas from the Scarborough field.

At the peak of this work, Winyama had around 30 local employees working on the project.

That's what long-term investment in our regions can create.

With these great opportunities on the table, it's so important that our leaders in government and business have the courage to keep stepping up to the plate.

I'm sure many here would agree with me that Western Australia's circumstances are unique.

WA is not connected to the national electricity market.

And it has long managed its own energy needs.

For example, the state's existing domestic gas reservation policy is a WA solution for a WA challenge.

Its flexibility has ensured the state has enough gas for domestic, industrial and resource sector use.

It has also balanced domestic needs with the ability to attract global investment in new supply, and build a wealth-generating export industry.

As we prepare for the introduction of a national gas reservation scheme, WA must retain this ability and the opportunity it affords.

As leaders within our organisations and communities, we should also encourage public debate on the energy transition that is respectful, balanced and focused on the facts.

I know the vision of Browse that I have presented here today may not be shared by everyone.

And that's ok.

We recognise the significant public interest in the project, and legitimate concerns around how Woodside will manage the project's potential environmental impacts.

It's why we've included carbon capture and storage as a core part of the development concept.

And why we have clear controls, informed by decades of scientific research, that are designed to manage and minimise potential impacts on the marine environment.

These controls are currently being considered by WA and Commonwealth regulators.

And we look forward to progressing our plans for Browse in a way that meets government and community expectations.

Conclusion

In closing, I'd like to leave you with a thought.

Forty years ago, our predecessors would have attended speeches just like this one.

The industry, government and community leaders who metaphorically sat in these chairs came together around shared challenges with common purpose.

And they had the foresight, and the courage, to seize the opportunities that have delivered the prosperity we enjoy today.

They helped the Pilbara become the economic engine room of the nation.

And created good jobs in supporting industries, in Perth and beyond.

We have an opportunity to build on that legacy.

And I'm optimistic that we will.

Because of the resources we have.

And because of the ingenuity and capability of Western Australians.

As a leader today, I know I must listen deeply, make brave decisions, and be unwavering in my commitment to deliver reliable and affordable energy

Because I know - just like those leaders did 40 years ago - that this will underpin WA's future prosperity.

And I think that's something we should all work towards.

Thank you.