

# Fitting in to a man's world

First female apprentice in the state

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**MAKING WAVES: Kellie Pitts is the first female apprentice with WPC Group and Toll Linehaul Fleet Services in Queensland to successfully complete a Heavy Vehicle apprenticeship.**

KELLIE Pitts, 23, is the first female in Queensland to complete her heavy vehicle apprenticeship with Toll, and they're proud of it.

She has been rewarded with a full time job with the company.

Originally from Sarina, Ms Pitts followed her brother Trevor, who was practising in the trade, into the industry.

"He was the first one in it, I actually wanted to be a boiler maker in the beginning," she said.

"I ended up coming across this and decided to give it a go.

"I loved it and went for the interview, got the job and started working with them a week later."

After four years of intensive training, Ms Pitts said she was both thrilled and relieved to have finally finished her apprenticeship and to have secured a role as a diesel fitter with Toll in Mackay.

"It's a great feeling," she said. "My family was overwhelmed and excited too, my mum actually cried when she heard the news.

"I'm looking forward to the job and seeing what the future holds."

According to Ms Pitts, working in a male dominated industry can be difficult at times, but she didn't let the doubts often cast upon her, get in the way of her goal.

"It can be tough being the only fe-

male," she said.

"You definitely get the feeling sometimes that people don't think you can do it, but you have to prove them wrong.

"Normally they're pleasantly surprised once they see what you can do."

Toll regional manager of Far North Queensland Tim Frey said Ms Pitts was the best apprentice Toll had ever brought through regional Queensland, and he often had employers asking to have her back. "She's exceptional," Mr Frey said.

"She applied herself to the position, and went ahead in leaps and bounds to finish all her studies.

"She did some work in Rockhampton and Gladstone and qualified mechanics there were asking if they could get her to come work with them because 'gee she did some great work'."

On Tuesday, Ms Pitts was awarded her apprenticeship certificate of completion by Mr Frey, along with administration manager Carol Meyers and state manager for WPC Group Janine McPhee.

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