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Day 1, Wednesday 14th September

3:50-4:00pm: Judi Jones Introducing the TIO's Vision and Strategy

Thank you so much, and thank you to Christian for going to the trouble of making that possible. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I'm now going to introduce Judi Jones, who is the new Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, and she joined the organisation in March this year, she came from electricity and gas complaints commissioner scheme in New Zealand, and we sort Tasmanian and New Zealand theme today, and she will talk to us a bit about new strategies and vision for the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman and then we will hear about a whole lot of other people who deal with complaints in their work.

JUDI JONES: Tena koutou. I would like to start with transporting you to a world far, far away and a slightly different time frame, so we're back off to New Zealand and back to 2014. And in 2014, I had been leading the electricity and gas complaints commissioner scheme – another very long title – for 13 years. And we thought we were going pretty well. We were quite well-respected by the industry and other stakeholders. Staff were engaged and happy and, as awareness amongst consumers grew, so did our complaints. Or complaints to us, not about us! We were not perfect but we felt pretty good about where we had got to. But we wanted to be better. Our complaints process had been developed at a time when we were not so well-respected and when there was low trust in the industry of us and even between providers. And the design of the complaints process had also been compromised by evolving in response to nine different funding arrangements in the 13 years of operation of the scheme. So I believed it was time to re-think the way that we worked. In preparation for this, I tapped into knowledge from books in our library on innovation and thinking differently. I read journal articles and looked at the way other schemes did things. I was pretty happy with my planned pitch to staff to re-think our process and the way we worked. So I gathered the team together and pitched the concept. I wanted the team to be in the right mind-set to think really differently about the way we worked. I explained that I wanted us to use first principles thinking – to look at things like we were starting over. I spoke about getting some quick wins and getting those low-hanging fruit, and finally I wanted everyone to think outside the box and to adopt blue skies thinking. As I finished my speech, I looked around the team and checked to see how inspired they were. And in the break between me speaking and when I could only assume they were getting ready to applaud, a voice rang out very loudly saying, "That's rubbish"! It was Lewis. Lewis was a new employee, a conciliator, the TIO's equivalent of an officer. He had been a consultant, a psychiatrist and finally a ship's cook. He described himself as being rescued from the retirement couch when we employed him. Lewis said, "We should be focusing on green skies thinking". Feeling a little irritated, I asked him, OK, Lewis, tell me more, what's green skies thinking? He said, it's when the ship is upside down and all you can see is green water. So green skies thinking is about throwing everything you know upside down and seeing what you need to do to get the right way up. And I liked it. Lewis had seen through me and undermined my preparation with two words – but I liked his suggestion. Because it isn't about starting over, it's about starting from where you are and with what you have learned and looking towards what's coming up next and then designing for that future. So green skies has become my metaphor for re-thinking and for innovation. Now, I'm not saying that when I came to the TIO we were a sinking, or even capsized ship. There have been admirable captains steering us but I think there is value in throwing everything upside down and looking at what is best to do to get ready for the next stage. And that really is our journey with our new strategy. We've thrown everything about the TIO upside down and looked at what we're here to do and what we're here to do is dispute resolution. So we're putting that at the heart of everything we do. In the formal sense, our primary purpose is to provide a fair, independent accessible dispute resolution service for the telecommunications industry that complies with the benchmarks for industry-based customer complaints

resolution schemes and we believe that will contribute to enhanced confidence in the telecommunications industry. We are clear about the scope of our work. We cannot be all things to all people. And to us, dispute resolution is not only about resolving individual complaints, but also dealing with systemic issues. It's about promoting fair and effective resolution of complaints, and providing information and analysis to community, government and members. So going forward, we have four strategic goals. We will build a sustainable organisation that embraces change, with a key focus on our people and infrastructure. We will provide an independent dispute resolution service that's efficient and effective, but doesn't compromise our integrity. We'll collaborate with and share knowledge with members and other stakeholders, with the aim of reducing avoidable complaints and improving telecommunications services and, finally, we'll be known, respected and accessible. And the key to achieving our purpose and goals is our people – our biggest and most critical asset. I believe strongly in the phrase, "It is people, it is people, it is people". Organisations often talk about their people as a valuable asset, but that's not always the reality. I fundamentally believe in our people. Whether you call us to discuss a complaint or email us about our complaints data, when you see us at an outreach event or speaking at a conference, it's our people that are the face of the TIO. Our people make the decisions, are our knowledge base, design and build our business systems, deliver our service, come up with our dispute resolution services and deliver our learning and development. So we will focus on people leadership. When you interact with us, we want you to know you are interacting with the right person, who knows what they're talking about. And our people will focus on our primary purpose – that of resolving complaints. So we've reorganised our organisation to put excellence in dispute resolution at the centre of everything we do and organise the support services around that. Now, we know that some of our members think the cost of our service is too high and while this may or may not be true, we owe it to members and consumers to ensure we're working as efficiently and effectively as we can. So we're going to look at our dispute resolution processes more broadly. We need to take a flexible approach so every time we are thinking, "For these parties and for this complaint, what is the next best step"? We should be able to switch between investigation and conciliation at any stage of handling our complaint, choosing the best method to achieve resolution. We'll focus on learning and development, up-skill our staff. I want my team to learn something new every day. By constantly extending themselves and making sure they have the right tools to do the job. We'll also have a focus on optimising and authorising the environment in our systems. This isn't about taking short cuts at the expense of the service we provide – we must do our job with integrity and continue to be independent. We're told by some people we can see too consumer-focused and by others we focus too much on members. We need to get the balance right so the community and our members respect our decisions and trust us to be independent. We want to be respected for our expertise in dispute resolution and also in telecommunications issues. Whether you are a provider, a consumer or other stakeholder, when you contact us, I want us to understand the detail of what you are talking about. And then we need to be able to explain some complex issues in clear and simple ways. And it's also important that we have a service focus. We need to explore what it means to be accessible in 2016 and beyond. We might need to extend hours of availability, use social media or interact with consumers on Snapchat with a deer filter. More likely, however, it is likely that we will introduce a live chat and allow more consumers to communicate with us in real-time, using a channel that's flexible and convenient for them. In the context of our outreach work we need to know more about the people we provide a service to, so we can focus our attention on the communities that are not so familiar with us. We'll be smarter with our outreach and work in partner with other industry ombudsman schemes. I'd like to see us using and sharing our collective knowledge base better. We can provide value to members by sharing information about the complaints and resolutions we see. And we can also be smarter about how we share this information with you. I want stakeholders to have confidence and get meaning from our complaints data. I want to provide it to you sooner and make it available to help you do your job better. My vision is that when you work with us in the future, you will receive an excellent dispute resolution service that is efficient and effective, without compromising integrity. And as we go on the journey to reorient our ship, there may be some rough seas and some ill winds, but that's part of any journey. And finally, we'll be accountable. So while I'm saying, "This is what we're going to do" I'm happy to come back next year and tell you how we're sailing.

(SPEAKS MAORI)