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Issue: 09/12/2011

## People on the Move: Leighton Holdings Names New CEO

09/12/2011

By Debra K. Rubin

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In a management shake-up, Leighton Holdings Ltd., the St. Leonard's, Australia-based contractor, has named **Harnish Tyrwhitt** to be CEO. A 26-year company veteran, he replaces **David Stewart**, who resigned on Aug. 25 after eight months in the position. He had succeeded **Wal King**, who served 23 years as CEO. Since 2007, Tyrwhitt had been managing director of Leighton Asia Ltd., based in Hong Kong, and a director of Leighton Contractors (Asia) Ltd. The company claims Leighton Asia "is now considered one of the top-tier contractors" in Hong Kong. Earlier this year, Tyrwhitt also took over management of Leighton's offshore and India operations. The contractor's board also elected as its new chairman **Stephen Johns**, a corporate director since 2009. He replaces **David Mortimer**, who stepped down on Aug. 24.

Leighton credits Stewart for "stabilizing the firm," but says "new leadership is now required for Leighton to move forward." The contractor ranks 11th on ENR's list of the Top 225 Global Contractors, with \$18.5 billion in total revenue in 2010, about \$3.6 billion outside Australia. But

Leighton posted a \$435-million loss last month in its results for fiscal 2011, noting difficulties at its \$3.7-billion desalination plant in Australia and cost overruns at its Brisbane Airport link project.

Unions at the plant have sued Leighton over job cuts, and the company's shareholders have filed a class-action suit, claiming the firm's financial issues were not properly disclosed. Leighton said on Sept. 1 that it would "vigorously defend" against the shareholder lawsuit.

Analysts speculate that the management changes follow the hostile takeover in May of German contractor Hochtief by Madrid-based global firm Grupo ACS. Hochtief has a 55% controlling interest in Leighton. In announcing the latest results for ACS on Sept. 1, General Manager **Angel Garcia Altozano** told analysts that "the storm is over" at Leighton and that he did not anticipate "any particular problem" with company earnings in the future. ACS reported a 20.5% increase in profit in the first half of 2011.

**Dale Spaulding** has joined Michael Baker Corp., Moon Township, Pa., as president of its Michael Baker Engineering Inc. unit, based in White Plains, N.Y. Most recently, he was senior vice president at engineering firm Louis Berger Group. **Warren Kroeppel** also has joined the engineering unit as director of aviation for the Northeast region. He had been general manager of LaGuardia Airport in New York City and was a 32-year veteran of the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey's Aviation Dept.



Sundt Corp., the Tempe, Ariz., building contractor has elevated **David S. Crawford** to be CEO, effective on Sept. 30. In that role, he will succeed **J. Doug Pruitt**, who becomes chairman, also in September. Pruitt was CEO since 1998 and joined the firm in 1966. Crawford, who was chief operating officer for eight years, joined Sundt in 1968 as a concrete laborer and was elected to its board in 1992. The firm says Crawford was active in pushing for a new law in Arizona that allows alternative project delivery on public projects. A degreed civil engineer, he also is past chairman of the Design-Build Institute of America. Sundt ranks 45th on ENR's list of the Top 400 Contractors, with \$1 billion in 2010 revenue.


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**CRAWFORD** Apex Cos. LLC, a Rockville, Md., water and environmental engineer, has named as new principals **Doug Canter**, **Bart Gaskill**, **Jon Wood** and **Chris Browning**. The roles follow the firm's Aug. 31 acquisition of Dallas-based TITAN Engineering Inc., at which they also had been principals. About 85 TITAN employees are joining Apex. The acquired firm had \$15 million in 2010 revenue.

Los Angeles-based AECOM has named **Susan Leal** as chief strategy officer and senior vice president for its water business in the Americas. Most recently, she was a senior fellow in Harvard University's Advanced Leadership Initiative. Leal also was general manager of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and a founding member of the Water Utility Climate Alliance, a group of large water utilities that are addressing climate-change issues.



LEAL

PENN

**BJ Penn**, a former acting U.S. Navy secretary, has joined RW Armstrong, an Indianapolis-based engineering firm, as senior vice president. In this role, Penn will build "strategic alliances with government entities in the U.S. and abroad," says the firm. He also served as assistant Navy secretary for installations and environment and as director of industrial base assessments for the Defense Dept. RW Armstrong ranks at No. 150 on ENR's list of the Top 500 Design Firms.

**Morrissey Goodale LLC**, a Boston-based industry management consultant, has named **Nick Belitz** as principal consultant in its new Denver office. He had been an investment analyst for Encana Oil & Gas, also based there, and a project manager for Ascendant Development Corp.

**Frank Ganendran** has joined CDM, the Cambridge, Mass.-based global engineer-constructor, as vice president, following its Aug. 31 acquisition of E3 Consulting Australia Pty Ltd., of which he had been CEO. Brisbane-based E3 is an environmental engineering firm with 40 employees.

Parsons Corp., Pasadena, Calif., has promoted **Brian P. O'Kane** to be senior vice president and infrastructure division manager, responsible for work in the firm's educational, health-care, municipal buildings, industrial, communications and energy sectors. He had been vice president of business development in Parsons' energy, industrial and commercial divisions.

**John Payne** has joined TRC Cos. Inc, a Lowell, Mass., engineering firm, as a principal. His new role follows TRC's Aug. 31 acquisition of The Payne Firm, a Cincinnati environmental consultant, of which he had been CEO. Payne, which has revenue of \$4.7 million, provides full life-cycle services to the legal and financial communities.

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