

**Mrs Rinehart's Acceptance Speech at the Export Heroes Award, 3 June 2009**

**The Honourable Simon Crean, Minister for Trade, The Honourable Julie Bishop, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Members of Parliament, Ian Murray AM, Executive Director of the Australian Institute of Export and Fellow Executives, distinguished guests and friends.**

**I would like to thank Tad Watroba, Don Voelte, and my long term friends, Ron Manners and Mark Creasy, each of whom is an icon in the Australian mining industry, for nominating me for this very special award. I would also like to congratulate my fellow award recipients, and, the Australian Institute of Export.**

**I am deeply honoured, and delighted, that the Institute of Export has included me in its very special list. The export industry is so very important to Australia and to Australia's future.**

**I greatly hope that Australia continues to keep competitive in world markets, strives for new ways to keep costs competitive, improves its policies to ensure that investment is welcome, and Australians like those we see here tonight, keep persevering!**

**For our part, we are still working towards a productive future with our next major iron ore project, Roy Hill 1, and two large steaming coal projects in Queensland, and other projects in the HPPL Group pipeline, with the help of our fantastic team. We also hope it will not be much longer before our partners, RTIO, get approval to proceed with the development of our third Hope Downs mine, Hope 4, also named in honour of my mother, Hope Hancock.**

**But tonight I want to share a few little stories with you. My outlook on life has been shaped by my formative years in the Pilbara, West Australia, years I loved with my father, Lang Hancock, a great Australian, and my mother, who truly lived the saying, "Behind every great man, there is a great woman". Where I grew up in the Pilbara, we were a long way from neighbours and a very long way from civilisation. This included before the iron ore industry was established in the north west in the mid 60's, before this industry brought facilities to the region it did not have – schools, hospitals, communication, power stations etc. We lived in the Pilbara when it was very much "make do or do without". To make a phone call there was no phone to pick up. Instead a small plane which we had to hand pump fuel into, then a hot and bumpy ride to Australia's hottest town, Marble Bar, to reach the nearest phone. In day time there were instead of neighbours, plenty of flies to keep us company and in the evening, plenty of mossies and other insects. They would swirl around our kitchen and the light above our dining table for the few hours in the evening our generator was on and we actually had electric light. We just took it as daily life.**

**For the vast distances in the remote north, we usually travelled by light aircraft, aircraft that were tossed around in the heat, especially over the rugged mountainous terrain. We had quite a few exciting occurrences with these aircraft, dad getting excited about spotting more iron ore from the air, meant at times we were late to return to the homestead or camp and had to land on air strips guided in by kerosene lamps along the strips and car lights at each end so we could know where to land. Life was far from easy for my mother in the bush.**

**One time we had aircraft trouble, and after gliding like a rock to land, my father had to decide what to do. He figured he could carry one child 17 miles back to our homestead, but not 2 children. So he had no choice but to leave my young aboriginal friend, Susan, and me with the little plane and walk the 17 miles back to the homestead. We were about 6 or 7 years old at the time.**

**I can well imagine how 2 geologists from Japan felt when dad had a wheel problem with the plane and had to also leave them in a remote part of the outback. He asked one of the geologists to pump up the punctured tyre so that he could try to take off, and the other to spin start the propeller. Dad then left them with some canned sardines and with what water he had and was fortunate to both take off and land with the broken wheel and then flat tyre. Back at the homestead he worked through much of the night to fix the problem. At day break next day, dad returned to the site on top of a flat mountain where he had left the two Japanese, who were in dad's words "cold and lonely like lizards". Yes they were pleased to see him. They never knew if they would see dad again, or for that matter, any other person. In winter nights in the Pilbara it does get very cold and apparently they not only froze but the dingoes kept them awake howling through the night! I was later told this adventure tale was then dined out in Tokyo for a long, long time.**

**Through these years I have had the wonderful opportunity to learn - there are no quick and easy solutions, if you keep trying you can find a way, hard work is essential in life, and the importance of persistence.**

**I dedicate this wonderful award and great privilege to Lang Hancock, who was pivotal in the development of the Pilbara iron ore industry, and to my mother Hope Hancock and our family.**

**Thank you**