

INFRASTRUCTURE WOMEN IN FOCUS



In challenging times when everything seems so uncertain, it is important to maintain some routine and stability in our lives. Please find below the next profile from our regular Woman of Focus series. This time, we profile WIN member Doris Stroh - plus Doris shares her top tips for surviving and thriving in the COVID-19 lockdown. Stay home and stay safe everyone!

WIN NZ has been established to increase the visibility of women in the infrastructure sector. Every month we profile a different woman working in a different part of the industry. If you would like to be profiled, or would like to nominate someone to be profiled, please answer the questions below and send your picture through to [Tara](#).

We'd like to introduce Doris Stroh from Aurecon as our next Woman of Focus. Doris is a member of the WIN Auckland Network.



DORIS STROH
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
TRANSPORT

aurecon

1. What company or organisation do you work for and what is your role there?

I am a Technical Director at Aurecon and the Operations Leader for Aurecon's Transport Unit. I am also a representative for Aurecon NZ to implement our Gender Diversity Action Plan for 2020 and the chair of the Association of Consulting Engineers, New Zealand (ACE NZ) Transport Group.

2. Tell us about your career background and how you got to this position/role?

I completed my Masters in Economic Geography in Germany. As part of this, we worked on papers with the Civil Engineers, and I ended up doing more papers with them while also working in a smaller transport consultancy. After we came to New Zealand and had our two boys, I began working for Beca in different roles. 10 years later, I thought I would try something different and began working for a smaller consultancy, Calibre Group as the Transport Sector Leader & Unit Leader Infrastructure. However, I quickly realised that I prefer larger companies and moved to Aurecon at the end of 2018. I get bored very quickly and was therefore always keen on any new role that got thrown at me if I thought it would help progress my career. Some roles were more exciting than others, but I loved the challenge of learning and doing something different most days.

3. Tell us about a project you are currently working on and why it interests you?

I have been working for over six years as the Traffic Management Coordinator for the AMA, hence I get involved in projects such as Traffic Impact Assessments, Temporary Traffic Management, Traffic Operations Centers and more. In my main role, my day to day tasks are primarily financials, business planning, strategies, resourcing, recruiting and managing our over 200-strong Transport team.

4. What's the hardest job you've ever done and why?

At the outset, all new jobs are challenging – which is why change is so important. Over the last ten years I have held a range of different leadership roles in a predominantly male industry. Most people I have worked with have been very supportive. I have only really encountered challenges when I was going head to head with someone for a role or someone just didn't want me in the role. Over time I worked to gain the trust of those individuals by being honest and open right from the start. One of the main lessons I have learned in my career is just to be

yourself and never pretend to know something you don't. If there is anything I am unsure of, I just keep asking questions.

5. Can you think of one example where your "diversity" has materially affected the outcome of a work situation or project, either positively or negatively?

While working for Beca I was based on site as part of the Auckland Motorway Alliance. Working on the Temporary Traffic Management Team, I mainly dealt with male contractors. As part of my role I frequently went out doing audits of road closures at night. The guys in charge of the closure were always very polite when I came on site. They respected me, the advice I gave and most of them tried to have a "perfect" closure when they knew I was doing audits that night.

6. And finally, what is your top tip for surviving and thriving in the COVID-19 lockdown?

Most important are the "check ins" with the teams. At the start of lockdown, I instigated daily meetings with the Team Leads, which were vital to ensure our people were settling into work from home, had the equipment they needed to do their job, knew what was required of them and to check in on their mental wellbeing. As lockdown continued, these catch ups were reduced to every second day. Even now these meetings are still critical, as there is always something to discuss to make sure the team is happy and functioning well.

Just as important as these formal check ins are the virtual coffee/drinks catch ups I have with my colleagues. A half hour catch up via Teams on a Friday afternoon is a great way to finish off the week. I actually "see" more of them and have got to know them much better in lockdown than I did before!

For me personally, getting my daily workout is key - preferably early in the morning before sitting down at my desk with the headset on in meetings for the next 8 hours. Late in the afternoon, I join the rest of the family for a long walk around the neighbourhood to get some fresh air. A few more breaks during the day would probably be better, but the day just goes by so quickly.

#StayHomeNZ

To learn more about opportunities for a career with Aurecon click [here](#) or you can connect with Doris on [LinkedIn](#).

