

QBE Insurance Chairperson of the Year

Roderick Deane



OUTSTANDINGLY UNORTHODOX

Dr Roderick Deane's rise to the top of New Zealand's hierarchy of corporate performance has, in many respects, been as unorthodox as it has been successful. The story of his career is hardly the stuff of classic management texts but the challenges and triumphs along the way make compelling reading and provide ample proof of his extraordinary leadership skills and abilities as a chairman of the board.

An early career in the executive ranks of the government sector for instance, hardly seems like the most promising place to start a successful second career at the top level of the sometimes bruising world of corporate commerce. On the other hand, a stint as deputy governor of New Zealand's Reserve Bank when the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister were one and the same and Robert Muldoon to boot, was a valuable testing experience and provided a surprisingly public display of personal competence and confidence.

Deane's subsequent move to the private sector and his successful terms first as chief executive of the newly formed Electricity Corporation and subsequently as chief executive and managing director of Telecom, together earned him special recognition as New Zealand's Top 200 Executive of the Decade in 1999.

His subsequent move upstairs to the chairmanship of Telecom may not be considered best practice in governance circles, but Deane has never allowed precedent to set his standards or compromise his quest for outstanding performance. His transition from the executive to governance is now complete. He has, in five years, shown himself to be an outstanding chair. Telecom, for example, is performing strongly and the relationship between Deane as chair and Gattung as CEO is a major contributor to Telecom's improving performance.

In addition to his corporate chairmanships Deane is also patron and on the board of governance of IHC Inc and chair of the City Gallery Wellington Foundation. **M**

JUDGES' COMMENTS

WINNER

Dr Roderick Deane

Roderick Deane has been both the Deloitte/Management magazine Executive of the Year and its Top 200 Executive of the Decade for the 1990s. Now he is one of New Zealand's most outstanding chairmen, having successfully made the shift from management to board. Deane chairs some of New Zealand's largest and sometimes most challenging enterprises. He is currently chair of Telecom, Fletcher Building, Te Papa, the New Zealand Seed Fund and the newly merged ANZ National Bank. His route to the top, through the ranks of the public service and out into the commercial world, may have been an unusual one for a successful private sector executive and director but, on the way he built an unequalled reputation for delivering results, for thoughtful and intelligent decision making, for being associated with successful transitions and for being able to adjust his leadership style to suit the situation. He has, perhaps more than any other director, made chairmanship a profession, setting an example for the way in which chairs should act and discharge their responsibilities.

FINALISTS

Wayne Boyd

Wayne Boyd's reputation as an outstanding company director and chair had him feature in this category of the Top 200 Awards last year. He is

currently chair of Auckland International Airport and Freightways. His appointment to the board of Telecom this year is yet more evidence of his reputation as an effective director whose governance skills are increasingly in demand. Boyd is strong on strategy, compliance, financial performance and board leadership. He is acknowledged as a commercially focused strategic thinker who is fair but willing to take tough decisions when necessary. His involvement at the top level in New Zealand hockey shows he is a leader who is willing to tackle any role where his skills are valuable. His chairmanship of Freightways to accompany its successful float also illustrates just how highly the investment market rates his commercial skills.

Rob Challinor

Northington Partners principal Rob Challinor's reputation as a mentor to many of New Zealand's now successful chief executives and directors is testament to his skills as a leader and his application of best practice management and governance standards. Challinor has accepted some of the toughest governance challenges in the market, particularly in the public sector. He is currently chairman of Mighty River Power and several smaller boards including Kingfisher and Sheffield. As a chairman, he has a reputation for fairness, equity and generously committing his time to the organisations he serves. And Challinor's professional approach to ethical and best practice governance processes make him an ideal role model for younger and aspiring directors.