

**Inaugural IMARC Lifetime Achievement Award Acceptance Speech given on 12 November 2015 by  
Hancock Prospecting Pty Ltd & Roy Hill Holdings Pty Ltd, Chairman, Mrs Gina Rinehart**

Good evening and thank you for your very warm welcome and kind introduction.

Let me start by thanking the executive for this honour.

There are few more significant things that can happen in a person's career than being acknowledged by an industry which I believe is so important to our country. Thank you most sincerely.

I am very touched by this award and thank everyone involved.

This honour also means a lot to my company – to the loyal, hard working executive team who have worked with me, and especially now, as we approach the historic and exciting First Ore On Ship from Roy Hill.

It is lovely to see so many faces I know here tonight - and a special thanks to my wonderful friends, several of whom have flown to Melbourne to be here with me for this special evening.

As I reflect on some of the difficult and challenging times in my life, I thank you for always being there with your amazing friendship and kind words. I am an exceptionally fortunate person and I sincerely thank each of you, including those who are not here tonight.

Before I share a little of the Roy Hill story, let me for a moment or two take you back to the days of my childhood and the experiences of my upbringing, which from the very beginning formed part of my being and is probably imbedded in my DNA!

I consider myself extremely fortunate, as many of you already know, for my outback Australia upbringing.

My parents and I were throughout my mother's lifetime a small but exceptionally close and devoted family. I learnt much more from their actions than just what they said. This I believe has helped me through at times a very difficult life and helped bring me to the privilege of being here tonight.

From as early as I can remember, I went out with my father on the station windmill runs. If windmills weren't working our sheep and cattle could not last without water and would die. When these runs were by vehicle, it would be one of my jobs to open and close the gates of the paddocks as we drove through. Sometimes the gates weren't in good condition and difficult for a young child to open, so dad would let me struggle for a while then if I really couldn't do it, he would come and help. At each windmill my task was to climb up with whichever tool dad required. If I got it wrong, it meant I had to climb back down and try again. Even though I would have been only four, then five and six, it was my responsibility to climb up and down the windmill ladder safely as often as needed, with no safety harness or helmet, and tools in hand. I never once recall complaining about having to do this work. It was simply doing what was needed.

On the station work was just a way of life. If I wasn't helping dad I would be helping my meticulous mother at home. Given the red dust and no reticulation outside, therefore, no lawn, she liked the house swept twice a day which was also one of my tasks. Though I much preferred when the electricity was on for around two hours a day or every second day when we could do the washing, my mother feeding the clothes to me through the wringer, as washing machines weren't what they are today. Those old wringer machines worked just fine with the red dust! The kitchen my mother worked in, when the wood oven was on, as it was pretty well every day, was like a furnace during the day. Despite the heat we still enjoyed being together there and doing the tasks to prepare the daily meals often with cakes and other treats. Looking back, this heat must have been very tough on my mother though I can't remember her ever complaining. It was just the way it was and we just got on with it. Sometimes in the evenings when dad would fly back after dark from prospecting we could hear him approach and would dash down to the

airstrip and light the kerosene lamps along the runway so he could land, leaving the vehicle lights on at the end of the strip. When there was work to be done, it had to be done. You just cope and get on and do it, as we did as a loyal team in our various capacities.

I grew up with the benefit of cement floors, tin roofs, outback remote and rugged conditions and my mother's wisdom not to waste hard earned money. My mother had too much respect for my father's work, many times risking his life in tiny uncomfortable planes, than to waste money. As I have mentioned at times to my friends, when in the city approximately 1,000 miles to the south, she always used to tell the taxi driver not to go around the scenic river drive as that would be two shillings, later 20 cents, more expensive. Common sense was valued as was a switched on brain capable of thinking clearly, including how to overcome obstacles. Persistence and perseverance were certainly an embedded part of my mind's DNA. These were simple and valuable foundations that have supported me throughout my life and I believe have helped me to achieve what I have. When I became older they must also have helped me as my dad used to say – 'I worked like 20 men!' and goodness how I have needed these foundations in my life!

When Roy Hill starts shipments, it will mark the culmination of years of long hours, hard work and great risk. As I reflect back to 1992 when I took over the Chairmanship of HPPL, the company was not in good shape. Those who knew of the difficulties made comments such as "impossible to fix". However this was not an option, I was a widow with four minor children to be responsible for and apart from an elderly very dear aunt, no immediate family to fall back on. The few assets left in the company were either mortgaged to the hilt, under legal threat or claim, or required to pay back liabilities incurred well before my Chairmanship.

Roy Hill, with our company's investment as initial, then major investor, will have employed more than 40 thousand men and women and engaged hundreds of small companies in related industries across Australia and the region. By the time that first ship leaves our wharf, the project will have navigated a mountain of regulatory approvals, licences and permits. Over 4,000 in total, plus even more for actual construction, over 1000 more! No-one thought our comparatively small company could achieve this, and what a battle it's been!

It is a remarkable story, the journey to becoming the largest iron ore mine in Australia– a vast mega project that will earn export revenue for Australia for 20 years or more

Much as I'd like to give an excited and happy speech, to show how happy my friends, family and staff are about this wonderful lifetime award, and we surely are, I feel considering that doing business in Australia today is not easy, you might have come here tonight to hear more from me! Especially not easy as we know, for our mining industry. Hence, I should address with you tonight some serious issues facing our country, instead of just basking in award happiness!

It can be very challenging wading through what has become very complicated bureaucratic processes which tend to impede investment, add costs and delay projects. Has everyone here noticed this?

We've become a nation of compliance, rather than one of productivity. Not great for our future is this?

I have spent a lot of time travelling and working in Asia and increasingly people are telling me that to significantly invest in Australia is becoming far too complicated, primarily through Government regulation and compliance issues. Declining productivity is also mentioned. Many man hours wasted on protracted government approvals, permits, licences and compliance impact productivity, but few outside of industry seem to understand this. All of us here need to better inform.

I sincerely hope for the sake of the future of Australian youth and the ever increasing numbers of our older generation requiring additional services, that this will change and that our Roy Hill project will not be the last major private enterprise mainland project to happen in Australia.

It was Ronald Reagan who once said, “The most terrifying words in the English language are: I’m from the government and I’m here to help.”

The most dangerous mindset we keep lurching towards in Australia is one that says; governments and the public service need to be watching out for us. Let me say, responsible people are just fine at looking out for themselves. Indeed, in the pastoral industry for instance, , much more needed investment could be made in improving machinery, vehicles, aircraft and airstrips, for real safety, if less was wasted on needless government regulation. In short, government regulation can often do the exact opposite of its promoted intention 'protecting the people', given the expense and time burden involved.

Every time Parliaments, both State and Federal sit, more rules are added to those already in place.

A former Treasurer, Peter Costello said, quote, “no-one in the public service loses their job for imposing a cost or burden on the public that is too high.”)

Peter commented that government is like a lush tropical jungle. It doesn’t need care and nurture to take off. It grows of its own accord. It’s pruning it that takes the effort.)

In the paperless computer era – there seems to be more paperwork than ever. It was thought that Technology would help to make governments more efficient, yet the size of government just keeps growing.

Are we better off as a result? The continuing expense, delays to projects and slow down in exploration and investment helps to answer that. Australia needs to stop finding reasons not to do things and pursue ways of making things happen – and Australia needs to be more cost competitive if our country is to continue to count on the prosperity that mining brings.

Despite what is often misportrayed and misrepresented, for whatever reason by some in the media, mining is never easy.

I don’t need to tell you, it is never simply a matter of finding a piece of land with some minerals and then just digging it up, to produce an instant flow of revenue.

For instance, with our own HPPL group, when I undertook the responsibility of the Chairmanship of the Hancock Prospecting Group in 1992, against all advice at the time, we took a huge risk on the Roy Hill tenements dropped by iron-ore leader BHP. Everyone thought it was the wrong decision.

Back then, I was the youngest in the company and I was acting against the recommendations of key staff and our consultant.

When the most knowledgeable company in iron ore in the Pilbara, then BHP, had decided that the Roy hill area was not of value, you can understand why people thought this was not a viable opportunity, especially when our company was in such difficult financial times. I pressed ahead because I shared my father’s positive vision for the North and its development. Despite the fact that we could only trickle in money for our exploration and studies in the 90’s while still repaying previous debts and this was only one of our problems. After having spent approximately \$100 million of high risk money, which in those days was an immense commitment for us, we learnt that land for berth areas we believed would be for our Roy Hill project, would be given to others. This made us land locked; we would not be able to export. This effectively destroyed the value of our project. After some years a later government gave us back two of the berth areas we had originally thought would be ours, under expensive conditions. This delayed our project by years, as did a later competitor related matter which also landlocked our project, destroying the value of our project again, and causing more years of delays.

Despite this and other difficulties we have in addition to three major mines operating at Hope Downs with our international partner, Roy Hill is now successfully mining and transporting its ore to coast, as shown in the pictures on screen.

Many media reports said we'd never be able to pull off this mega-project. Today we are mining ahead of schedule, 4 mining pits are working successfully, our railroad and wagon loaders and unloader are operating, and marine port is ahead of schedule - we are defying the knockers.

We have had many firsts for the Roy Hill mega project.

"Gina Rinehart is an Australian icon. She epitomises so many of the qualities that made our nation great. Her bold vision is matched by her indomitable spirit, determination and selflessness.

In the cut throat, male dominated world of the mining industry, Gina has demonstrated time again that she has no business industry peer. Gina remained strong and resolute despite many serious challenges and obstacles with Roy Hill over more than two decades. The imminent launch of this monumental project confirms her tremendous legacy to our country.

I continue to be amazed and inspired by Gina's humility and genuine compassion. Her selfless contributions to broader Australian society are very significant and I believe under appreciated. She champions so many worthy causes ranging from sport, education, cancer research and care, small business and the development of Northern Australia.

I recently had the great privilege of accompanying Gina for the launch of her book ('From Red Tape to Red Carpet and then some') at the official residence of Prime Minister Modi in India. Her visionary book serves as a timely reminder of what is needed for our nation to once again shine.

Spiro Pappas"

Roy Hill is not only a major achievement for Hancock Prospecting - it is important to the many thousands of people directly employed by it and to others employed by our suppliers and related industries across the country.

Most significantly, this is an Australian achievement – a project Australia needs.

Roy Hill is a symbol that Australians can overcome a mountain of obstacles and still do it.

I am honoured and very delighted to share with you tonight the debut of a very special song, created by my dear friend Jim Viets. This is the first time this wonderful song has been sung in Australia. It honours those who put their shoulder to the wheel to bring prosperity and focus to one of the most remote regions of the world. It pays tribute to the hardworking women and men of our country. It is sung by my friend Geoff Thompson, together with his wife, Karyn Planett and Jim Viets. Let's now enjoy this exciting song together.

Most Australians have an ambition for a continuing high standard of living – with subsidised improved health care, adequate defence both internal and external, and extra assistance for our elderly - if we have any chance of keeping it that way, continuing investment has to happen. Government and media have to realise and accept the fact that to continue to be a viable exporter Australia must remain cost competitive with the rest of the world.

I have long recognized that we face increasing competition with many emerging low cost nations and Australian governments, both State and Federal, need to fully recognise that we must attract further investment. If we are to do this we must cut costly red tape.

I've suggested for years that we should establish special economic zones, as are common and successful throughout Asia and elsewhere, to encourage investment and business. Northern Australia indeed all of Australia, would benefit with such zones, where government burdens are reduced. Australia needs to unleash its potential and look for growth opportunities in our largely undeveloped North a North so close to the important and increasingly important Asian market. This is why I started ANDEV, Australians for Northern Development and Economic Vision some years ago.

I would like to thank the hon ANDEV executive, some of whom are here tonight, wonderful people dedicated to Australia's North, and also wonderful friends.

Profits is a concept becoming increasingly envied or hated in Australia, but let me venture to say, in the hope that you will repeat please, what should be commonsense, banks won't loan money and people or companies won't invest, if they think they will make losses. Profits are needed for investment and reinvestment, which is needed to maintain or improve Australia's living standards, and as I've said, provide revenue for amenities Australians usually want, hospitals, defence, etc., and to provide opportunities and jobs. Profits are also beneficial so that company donations can be made to charities. Something I have rarely spoken about, since starting the first breast cancer foundation in Australia, back in the early 1990's, is my involvement with cancer patients care.

I have been encouraged to do so now, as recently an initiative we had quietly started in hospitals in W.A. and now also in the North, was unfortunately misreported in eastern media, which led to further unfortunate public criticism, that I shouldn't be supporting dying patients and should instead be supporting other things.

We have asked a few of the people who have written to us, for their approval to share their emails regarding our hospital patient care programme. This is a programme focused on reducing the risk of infection, and to give rest and comfort to patients who have long stays in hospital and their recoveries at home - irrespective of the medical reason they are in hospital. This is a care program close to my daughter Ginia's and my heart.

Profits have also made it possible for me to support hardworking, deserving youth in Australia, great ambassadors for our country, and potentially future leaders.

After our performance issues at the London Olympics I decided to accept the invitation to become Patron of Swimming Australia and Major Sponsor of our National Swim Team, in addition to other Olympics teams support and patronage.

When I reflect on - the over two decades of struggling through all the approvals, permits, licences and Governments compliance - paying back the Banks, paying salaries, and all other necessary expenses over the difficult early years, it gladdened my heart when there was some money left over for reinvestment, prudent management of overrun and other risks, and for worthwhile Charitable causes.

To be able to assist in this way, —to help our hardworking elite athletes, you have to first earn the money - to pay all obligations and commitments - before this can become a possibility. A reality too rarely understood. And if I may add my warmest congratulations and very best wishes to John Bertrand and Australia's Olympic teams, some of our young wonderful Olympians are kindly attending tonight.

May I ask my long standing executive director, Tad Watroba, who's stood by me through thick and thin, and boy was that thin uncomfortable! And my darling daughter Ginia, join me on stage to say good night.

Once again, I am honoured to accept this award, and thank you for the opportunity for this independent Aussie to speak to you tonight!

