



AT WORK AT NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK, CIO CRAIG BRIGHT TAKES PART IN AN EXERCISE AND NUTRITION PROGRAM AND WORKS 12-HOUR DAYS; OUT OF HOURS, TO RELAX, HE RUNS TRIATHLONS. IT SEEMS HE GETS TIRED ALMOST AS INFREQUENTLY AS THE SYSTEMS HE OVERSEES – THE LARGEST SUITE OF SUNGARD PRODUCTS IN THE REGION



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An encounter with an electronics kit, and a fascination with electronics from an early age, has led Craig Bright to one of the top financial technology jobs in Australia.

As chief information officer for National Australia Bank (NAB)'s global Institutional Markets and Services (IMS) business, and head of technology for the Transactional and Custodian Services businesses, Craig has transformed a disparate set of regional technology units into a more integrated global capability.

Although in his childhood he thought he was destined to be an electrician, Craig had a change of heart and went into electronics. The early part of his career was spent managing remote control systems in power stations and coal mines, then software development for managing the generation and distribution of electricity from major power stations. Nine years at Ernst & Young working with financial institutions eventually led to NAB in 2001.

The largest of Australia's "big four" banks, NAB has extensive international operations, owning banks in New Zealand and the U.K. With around 1,500 branches, the bank serves more than

10 million customers globally. In the year to 30 September 2004, the NAB Group recorded net profit of \$3.177 billion.

The IMS business is global and focuses on debt, risk management and investment products for corporate and institutional customers; National Custodian Services is one of the largest custodians in Australia; and the Transactional Solutions business provides a range of products and services including cash management, e-commerce, merchant facilities, liquidity management and international payment services.

ABSORBING DAYS

"My combined team provides the technology needed to deliver trading, financing, custodian and transactional products and services to our institutional, corporate and business clients," explains Craig. With such a wide remit, it's not surprising that

HOME LIFE

FAMILY: "Married with two children: Lauren, four, and Ashley, one."

HOME: "Sandringham, about 30 km from the city on Port Phillip Bay. "It's a great spot, close enough to the city for work, but also far enough away to distance yourself from the stresses of the city over the weekend."

HOMETOWN: Gippsland in south-east Victoria. "I am frequently reminded by family and friends that I have long since lost my country skills – which is accurate, based on my recent attempt at hay-carting."

PASTIMES: "I enjoy participating in triathlons. I have a fairly intense program of physical activity that provides an important release from work. Going to the gym or cycling is a daily ritual. And with two young children, there's a hectic array of activity on the weekends."

Craig's days are full, but it is something he relishes. "A large part of my role during the past three years has been to develop a more integrated global capability to better support the ambitions of our business. It's been a huge change – and while there always seems a lot more to do, looking back on where we have come from and what has been achieved makes the effort worthwhile."

Craig has done this with a team that runs into the hundreds – depending on the number and scale of the projects running at any given time, he can be overseeing the work of 650–750 staff globally. "Having teams in different parts of the world provides variety and the opportunity to work with people from various backgrounds who bring different approaches to their work," he observes.

INNOVATION AND COMPLIANCE

He spends little time at his desk, preferring to participate in "animated discussions with colleagues around a whiteboard". No two days are ever the same, something Craig views as a positive aspect of his role.

Innovation among team members is encouraged and Craig says his team has an excellent track record in drawing out benefit from emerging technologies. Among the projects the team is undertaking are a rationalization and improvement of trading systems; the implementation of a new credit risk management system in the form of SunGard's Adaptiv Credit Risk; developing the global technology and processing hub; and improving electronic delivery to corporate and business clients. The bank is the biggest SunGard user in the region, running a variety of solutions including MINT, Infinity, COMPASS, intelliMATCH and intelliSTOR.

WORK LIFE

BUSINESS HOURS: "Around 7:00 a.m. to between 6:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. While the work remains interesting and challenging, the hours have never been a concern. The time passes quickly – often too quickly!"

LOCATION: Bourke Street in Melbourne.

OFFICE: "We have an open-plan office, which is fine as I spend little time at my desk – influenced by many years in consulting, I guess."

VIEW: "We are on the 31st floor of the building and look out over the northern part of the city."

CORPORATE CULTURE: "In the past year we have implemented a personal resilience program aimed at giving everyone greater insight into health, nutrition and exercise. It's been a lot of fun and well received by the team."

Compliance is another area of focus as the bank responds to Basel II, the International Financial Reporting Standards and Sarbanes-Oxley. "This is quite a challenging environment as we ensure our regulatory and compliance requirements are met, while continuing to support other critical business initiatives," says Craig.

Technology is central to the success of the bank's business, he says, and while this places his team under pressure from time to time, the satisfaction that comes from delivering solutions that have a positive impact for the bank and its clients is enormous.

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