

CONFIDENTIAL

CITY BEAT



GLEN NORRIS

ENGINEER SEES FUTURE IN WASTE

HE'S a young engineer whose varied career has included building Australia's attack submarines and overseeing production of the famous Smith's chips.

Now **Daniel Blaser** has ambitions to make the 2032 Olympics the recycled games, using old building waste to build new infrastructure, including roads and stadiums.

Since taking over the fledgling Rino Recycling business at Pinkenba last year, Blaser has turned it into a \$5m business providing road base and other material for major projects, including Northshore Hamilton, the site of the future Olympic Village.

"We used the concrete from the old Ballymore stadium and Bulimba Barracks for new roads at Northshore," Blaser says.

"It is all about using the infrastructure of the past to build the infrastructure of the future. Rino recycles waste that would otherwise go to landfill to create new construction and landscaping materials that are used to build Queensland's infrastructure."

Rino, whose major shareholder is private equity group Alceon, is planning a multimillion-dollar processing plant that will allow it to double the amount of recycled material it processes to almost 700,000 tonnes a year. Currently, it is able to recover 80 per cent of

material, meaning only 20 per cent has to be sent to landfill. It wants to reduce the amount sent to landfill to 1 per cent or lower. Blaser says Australia lags most developed nations in recycling.

"We really are the poor cousins compared to the rest of the world," he says, as he drives your diarist through Rino's 10ha site near Brisbane Airport. Pointing to mountains of concrete, timber and plastic being crushed and sorted into usable material, he says the government has a key role to play in encouraging more recycling as part of the development of a circular economy.

He says the introduction of landfill levies across Australia has encouraged more companies to recycle, but says it is still cheaper to dump waste in Queensland than other states.

"In NSW it costs someone \$250 to take a tonne of waste to landfill while in Queensland it is only \$130," he says. As well as higher landfill levies, Blaser would like the use of a certain amount of recycled material to be mandated in major projects.

With a 25-year and almost \$65bn infrastructure development planned for Brisbane, he says the demand for recycled construction and demolition waste will rise. A challenge is to convince businesses and councils that recycled material is as good as virgin material.



Public service tipster

ONE of Queensland's top public servants may have an attractive side hustle as a tipster.

Queensland Under Treasurer **Leon Allen** learnt a bit about American football from his stint as the Commonwealth Bank's boss in New York. So buried in his weekly message to Treasury's 1000-plus staff on Friday was a tip for Super Bowl Monday. The message included a pat on the back for Treasury's commercial team and their role in announcements about boosting skills and jobs for Queenslanders. Allen also noted the QIC-managed Business Investment Fund commitment to Brisbane-based sports tech company VALD.

"Their cutting-edge technology is used by elite sporting teams around the world, from the Broncos and Lions here in Brisbane to the LA Rams, who'll play in Super Bowl LVI on Monday morning (Rams by three points)." The Rams did win by three. We hear requests for tips in Thursday's Powerball jackpot have been unanswered.



Charging into the US

BRISBANE electric charging company Tritium has continued its recent run of wins with a partnership to roll out fast chargers at major gas stations throughout Florida.

The partnership with Wise EV follows a huge start for the company in the US this year, which included the company listing on the Nasdaq, ringing the Nasdaq bell, and announcing a new facility alongside US President **Joe Biden** at the White House.

The rollout of the charging network is expected to start with 25 locations throughout Florida, the No.2 state in the nation for overall passenger electric vehicle sales.

Tritium last week announced it will open a factory in Lebanon, Tennessee, capable of producing up to 30,000 charging stations a year, backing President Biden's ambitions to create a national network of chargers.

President Biden praised the investment by Tritium, which will create 500 jobs, in an announcement at the White House with the company's chief executive **Jane Hunter**.



Skroo to outline plans

FLIGHT Centre boss **Graham "Skroo" Turner** will outline the company's post-pandemic plans at a top leadership lunch next month. Turner will be the first speaker of 2022 in the popular QUT Business Leaders Forum series.

It has been a tough time for Turner and Flight Centre as international border closures and lockdowns hit its bottom line. Skroo has not been shy to criticise government policy in response to the pandemic and we hear the booked-out lunch on March 9 will be an interesting and provocative one. But he believes the local travel industry is poised to take off, with Australia's plan to re-open its borders sparking a "flurry of activity" and a "significant uplift" in customer inquiries and bookings.

As a result, the company is now looking to hire new full-time staff, as well as targeting a return to monthly profitability within the financial year.

