

15 HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

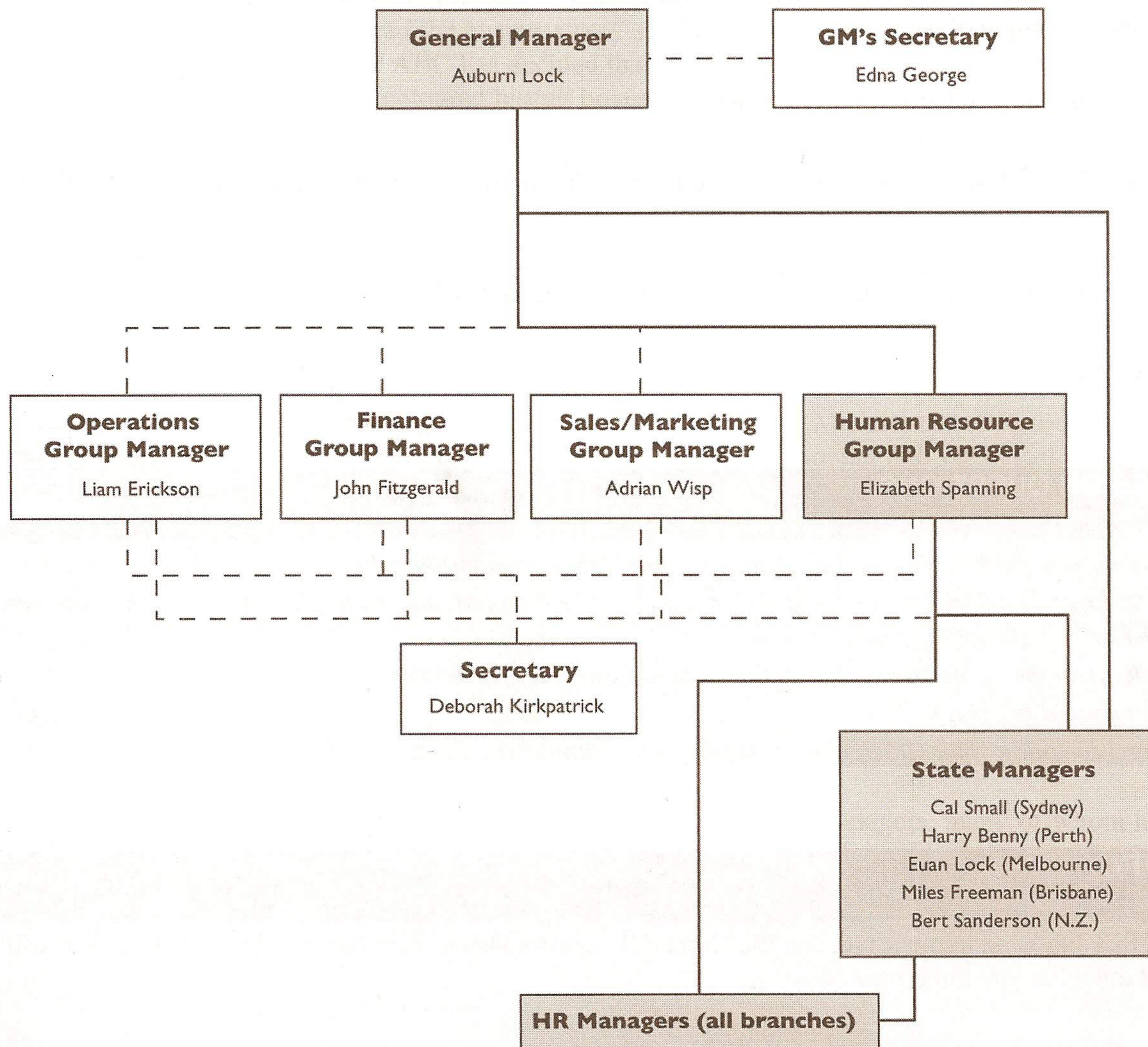


Figure 15.1 Qwikmail Organisational Chart



Elizabeth had called a work forum with all four State and New Zealand Managers and HR Managers for a period in early January when business was quiet and time was available for detailed analysis and planning (see Figure 15.1). It was to be an intense three-day workshop and, with Lock's full support, they had retreated to a resort on the Queensland coast.

Auburn Lock had attended the opening day only. As this was a significant forum at which Elizabeth could address all the senior staff, at least in a formal working capacity, Lock took the opportunity to introduce her, as some of the management team had yet to meet Elizabeth in person, explaining what new strategies she was working on for HR. Lock also reiterated the company's business and growth strategies before leaving Elizabeth to describe how HR strategy was to contribute further to the business.

Elizabeth spent the first couple of hours presenting her ideas of HRM for a company the size of Qwikmail, and how she had begun to utilise and build upon her experience from her senior roles in the retail and hospitality sectors. Her knowledge of changes and new pressures in the workplace was impressive and she emphasised the need for a total customer focus.

She also explained how she viewed staff in any organisation as being the key assets; essential for providing competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive and hostile environment. She was emphatic that she would work with all the HR Managers, State Managers and Line Managers over the next six months, looking at the HR in order to develop useful and workable systems fully supported by comprehensive HR procedures.

At morning tea, the group agreed that it was a most impressive performance and as far as Lock was concerned there was a definite air of excitement and expectation among his staff.

A matter of information

After lunch Elizabeth began questioning the managers on their specific HR knowledge as applied to Qwikmail. Despite the changes that had already been introduced, she was interested in gaining information from each person about local issues, current staff performance, attitudes, career development interests and so forth.

She was well aware from further talks with both Lock and Geraldine that the company was still lacking detailed policies and guidelines, so she had asked the HR managers to bring with them as much relevant information as they could, so as to make a start integrating it all and developing the systems.

Elizabeth spent the late afternoon and early evening elaborating upon a structure she would put into place, detailing how she would go about designing and implementing a more robust and complete HR operation. The first step would be to secure a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) capable of tying the functions together and providing the company with some useful information.