

MARKET RELEASE – Monday, 15 September 2025

Spark announces leadership team changes

Following the release of its new five-year strategy, Spark New Zealand (Spark) today announced changes to its leadership team, to align roles behind its FY30 ambitions. The changes take effect from 1 November 2025.

Spark CEO Jolie Hodson said “With a new five-year strategy in place we have aligned our leadership team to our new ambitions to ensure we bring the appropriate focus to our core connectivity business, and the capabilities that will deliver more for our customers and differentiate Spark.”

Mark Beder has been appointed to the newly created role of Chief Commercial Officer, with a focus on mobile growth, product and customer experience, and commercial partnerships.

Greg Clark moves into the expanded Chief Customer Officer role encompassing marketing, sales, and customer service teams that span all Spark customer segments, from consumer to business.

A new Chief Operating Officer role will lead Spark’s network performance, as well as business technology services and operations. In light of this changed focus, current Network and Operations Director, Renee Mateparae, has decided to explore new opportunities outside Spark. Renee will continue in her current role until the end of 2025, and Spark will commence an external search to appoint a Chief Operating Officer in the coming months.

To increase focus on critical enablers of the SPK-30 strategy, technology, AI, and brand will now have dedicated leadership. Matt Bain has been appointed Chief Technology and AI Officer and Leela Ashford has been appointed Chief Brand and Corporate Affairs Officer.

Finally, the General Counsel and Commercial Director role and Strategy and Regulatory Director role have been combined into one Chief Strategy, Legal, and Regulatory Officer role. Following a 16-year career with Spark, current General Counsel and Commercial Director Melissa Anastasiou has decided to explore new opportunities outside Spark, and John Wesley-Smith has been appointed Chief Strategy, Legal, and Regulatory Officer. Melissa will remain with Spark until the end of 2025, at which time she will also resign as a Director of Spark Finance Limited.

Stewart Taylor’s role as Chief Financial Officer and Heather Langton’s role as Chief People Officer remain unchanged.

Jolie continued “I would like to thank Renee for the significant contribution she has made during her time at Spark. Renee has led our network and operations group through a period of significant change, including the rollout of our 5G network, and most recently the establishment of our strategic network partnership with Nokia. She is passionate about new technologies and transformation, and we understand her desire to explore new roles with that focus. We wish her every success in the future.

“I would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution Melissa has made during her time at Spark. With her blend of deep legal expertise and strong commercial acumen, Melissa has been instrumental in many of our major transactions, including Connexa, HTAL, and data centres in the last 12 months alone. Melissa has built a highly capable legal team within Spark and has always been a champion of our inclusive culture. Having been a part of the business for many years, Melissa feels that now is the right time to explore new opportunities and we wish her every success as she embarks on this next stage of her career.”

From 1 November 2025 the Spark Leadership Squad¹ will include:

- Jolie Hodson, Chief Executive Officer
- Stewart Taylor, Chief Financial Officer

¹ Ms Mateparae will remain as a Senior Manager of Spark until her departure on 31 December 2025

- Mark Beder, Chief Commercial Officer
- Greg Clark, Chief Customer Officer
- Chief Operating Officer – to be appointed
- Matt Bain, Chief Technology and AI Officer
- Leela Ashford, Chief Brand and Corporate Affairs Officer
- Heather Langton, Chief People Officer
- John Wesley-Smith, Chief Strategy, Legal, and Regulatory Officer

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