

What makes an engineer today?

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The aim of this paper is to present the story of a young female engineer in-the-making and how she came to be a Cadet at Parkes Shire Council – a real life Pocket Sally!

Themes which will be explored include challenges faced in regional schooling, overcoming stereotypes, moving from Country to city and back, and the modern struggle of finding a career.

The paper will cover what first interested her in STEM fields, the progression and challenges of regional schooling, challenges faced of career prospects outside of High School, brief overview of the jobs undertaken in between, challenges of attitudes faced in the mining industry, and challenges faced in entering Engineering as a "mature age student".

Also covered will be her experience at her first regional IPWEA Conference held in Canowindra on her second week of employment at PSC, and the impact of Pocket Sally and the talk by David Swan from REDR Australia, and how the conference and experience at Parkes Shire Council has so far made her feel as though this is the right career move.

Through sharing her story, Cate wishes to encourage a dialogue for removing barriers to careers in STEM, and find ways to encourage others like her to enter the engineering field in Public Works.