



**POSITIVE...** Grant Luff believes the collapse of 1st Fleet could be a positive for Border Express.

Picture: BLAIR THOMSON

# Trucking upside

By BLAIR THOMSON

LAST week's collapse of transport giant 1st Fleet could have a silver lining for a local trucking company.

Between 600 and 1000 jobs are said to be lost through the company's closure and 1st Fleet is now in administration.

Border Express managing director Grant Luff said he was hopeful Border Express could "win over" some of 1st Fleet's customers.

"Obviously they were a large organisation with a lot of customers," he said.

"We'll certainly have the phone ringing but whether or not we end up with a lot of that work depends on rates and

depends of the freight profile, so it's a bit hard to say.

"We're certainly hopeful that we'll win some of them over but it can be a bit of a drawn-out process."

Mr Luff said Border Express staff had spoken to the administrators of 1st Fleet.

"We've said we're more than happy to talk to their staff and we've given them our contact details, so hopefully we can provide some of their people with work," he said.

"We've probably got about 10 positions in Derrimut we're trying to fill across various aspects, so whether or not we end up with them depends on their skill set and what we call their

'fit' factor, whether they'll fit into Border Express.

While Border Express, which has its head office in Albury's Macauley Street, could benefit from the closure, Mr Luff said it was concerning for the industry.

"Transport is a tough industry ... the average margin is two per cent, so there's not a lot of fat to play with," he said.

"While it creates an opportunity we also feel for companies that run into trouble because most of the time they're out there trying to do the right thing."

The latest challenge is the increase in the heavy vehicle road user charge announced in Tuesday's budget.