

National Association of Women in Construction – Submission

* NAWIC (the National Association of Women in Construction) is the nation's peak Association for Women in the building and construction industry. It was established in Australia in 1995 and is affiliated with similar Associations globally. NAWIC was founded in the USA in 1955.

* In Australia NAWIC operates in all States and Territories and represents women in all three construction sectors, residential, commercial and engineering construction. NAWIC's members come from the trades, para-professional and professional disciplines within the sector and are grouped into Corporate, Individual, Affiliate and Student members.

* The building and construction industry is a major contributor to the Australian economy and generates wealth for participants. It also contributes to the welfare of the community, particularly through the provision of shelter. The wellbeing of the building and construction industry is sometimes said to be a lead indicator of the general state of the domestic economy, so it is important for the sector to be strong and sustainable. Currently women share disproportionately in the wealth generation of the sector.

* In November 2012, female participation in the construction industry was 11.7%.

* Of greater concern is the fact that the gender pay gap remains at 17.7% which is higher than the national average of 17.5%.

NAWIC believes in advancing Women in Construction through Networking, Mentoring, Scholarships and Recognition:

* NAWIC runs over one hundred activities per annum across Australia, providing opportunities for Women in Construction (and their male colleagues and organisation representatives) to network together and discuss issues and solutions to a number of industry issues.

* NAWIC recognises inspirational Women in Construction through a variety of Awards each year, including the Crystal Vision Award for those who are truly making a difference in the sector.

* NAWIC provides a formal mentoring program available to women in the construction sector in every state (except currently Tasmania).

* NAWIC maintains stories of women's positive experiences in the industry and initiatives to make these more pervasive and available in the wider community and to help the industry attract and retain female workers and achieve the cultural change needed to meet the desired outcomes in the issues brief.

* NAWIC provides an International Women's Day Scholarship. This is a research scholarship for women working in the construction industry. The award presents an opportunity to develop a research paper to be used as a positive instrument for change. The award, which has operated in NSW, will go National for 2014, allowing women across Australia to apply for the funding to undertake a research project.