

29th January, 2013

Ms Mairi Steele
Director
Australian Government Office for Women
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Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610
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Dear Ms Steele

RE: Consultation on reporting matters for the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012

It is with great interest and recognition of the work done to date to develop the new Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 that I submit comments in response to first six questions raised in the consultation paper.

Although I am writing in a personal capacity, I am making a submission in the context of my work and observations as the Chief Executive Officer of a regional development organisation and as the Board Director of a Women's National Basketball League team.

1. Do these outcomes sufficiently reflect the intent of the Act?

a. Yes, they do seem relevant and reflect the intent of the Act

2. Do they need amending or expanding?

a. A sixth (6th) key outcome needs to be added to encourage not only an internal focus but also an external focus for gender equality in the workplace. For example, an organisation could act appropriately internally but still act externally in a gender biased way, I recommend adding "to promote gender equality in corporate, government, media and community engagement"

3. What are the priority measurable outcomes in terms of each objective?

a. Relating to the 6th outcome noted above, outcomes could include (i) community focussed activities by gender and (ii) community focussed sponsorship by gender.

4. What are the priority process indicators in terms of each key objective?
 - a. Relating to the 6th outcome noted above, process indicators could include (i) mode of community engagement and (ii) decision making processes for supporting community activities and sponsorships.
5. Do employers currently collect this information? What existing information is most useful? What information have employers previously collected but rejected for lack of insight?
 - a. Yes, employers with 100 or more employees would usually have a manager or staff that engage in a community or corporate relations type role and would measure their activities and outcomes and in particular their budgets for sponsorships. In most cases it would be extremely easy to advise if their targets for support are 100% female or male or an estimated ratio split.
 - b. The use of corporate funds to support external community relations is an area that could demonstrate support for gender equality. For example, if a company only supports community projects or sponsorships that are male dominated, then there is a poor message back to staff about the corporate's intent and the value they give to women. This is especially the case in organisations where there are a much higher percentage of women on staff. Some major well-known national organisations have significantly more women on staff than men, but their public image is very much about supporting men. This is particularly so in the case of support for national sports leagues and national sports teams, despite often the women performing at a higher level in international competition.
6. Which outcomes or process indicators are likely to be most useful for employers?
 - a. All are important and depending on the organisation, some will be more or less useful. However, as organisations are so diverse, based primarily on their industry, it would be difficult to narrow the list to only a few outcomes or indicators as they could distort the full picture.

I trust that the above information will be helpful in forming the reporting processes from 2014 onwards.

Yours sincerely

Name supplied