

On Board

Email Newsletter of the Ministry of Women's Affairs Nominations Service

April 2008

Welcome to the ninth edition of On Board.

In this edition:

- New Manager for Nominations Service
- Release of the 2008 New Zealand Census of Women's Participation
- New service for connecting women directors to private sector boards
- Appointments of women to state sector boards and committees
- Invitations to apply directly for roles

New Manager for Nominations Service

We are pleased to announce we have a new Nominations Manager, Pamela Cohen.

Pamela comes to MWA from the Asia New Zealand Foundation, where she has worked since 1995 as Education Director and, for a two-year period, Deputy Executive Director. She was responsible for bringing greater Asia awareness into New Zealand schools by working in partnership with business, government and community organisations.

Previously, Pamela was a programme officer at the Academy for Educational Development, an NGO in Washington, DC. Married with two children, Pamela has a degree in political science from Duke University in the United States, and pursued post-graduate studies at Delhi University in India on a Rotary scholarship.

Pamela will be starting with us on April 14. We're very excited to be working with her, and look forward to what she will bring to the Service.

Pamela replaces Joan Isaac, who left the Service in January to take up the role of Board Secretary for the Capital and Coast DHB.

Joan was with us for four years, and transformed the work of the Service during her time here. Joan's strategic focus and people skills were an inspiration to everyone who worked with her – this On Board email newsletter is one of her many innovations. We wish Joan all the best in her new role and thank her for all the work she has accomplished.

Release of the 2008 New Zealand Census of Women's Participation

There has been significant media coverage recently around the low participation rates of women in private sector governance. This is due to the release of the 2008 *Census of Women's Participation* by the Human Rights Commission.

The Census reveals that women hold 8.65 percent of board directorships on New Zealand Stock Market Top 100 companies. This figure has risen slightly from 7.13 percent in 2006.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs wants to keep encouraging debate and action towards an increase in the participation rates of women in private sector governance, while recognising it is primarily the responsibility of the private sector to address the problem.

Since the last Census, two new private sector databases have been established to help connect aspiring women directors with board opportunities. We have provided you with information about the first initiative, www.finddirectors.com, in a previous email and in On Board. We are pleased to be able to provide details about the second initiative, www.womendirectors.co.nz, later in this edition of On Board.

Our Minister, the Hon Steve Chadwick, spoke at the launch of the Census, and said there was compelling evidence from overseas that companies with more diversity on their boards perform much better, on average, than those with few or no women on their boards – which means real profits for shareholders. “Perhaps it’s the shareholders who should be asking ‘where are the women?’”, she said.

The Census report has this to say:

“The corporate sector will need a significant sea change to embrace diversity in governance as a value in itself that creates wealth. It needs one or two board chairs as male champions to break down the pattern of current informal recruitment and appointment practices.”

The Ministry will be helping to explore this option and we will let you know about any new initiatives taken.

The Census also draws attention to the Government goal of achieving 50 percent participation of women on state sector boards and committees by 2010, and questions whether the goal will be achieved. The latest figures available (from the Ministry's own stocktake) are that women made up 42 percent of Ministerial appointees as of December 2006. This figure is climbing slowly (one percent between 2004 and 2006).

It will be difficult for the Government to achieve the goal. We will continue to work towards it though, by getting suitable women into the selection pools for appointment and highlighting the business case for diversity on boards.

The full Census can be found online at this link
http://www.neon.org.nz/documents/HR%20Women_screen.pdf

New service for connecting women directors to private sector boards

www.womendirectors.co.nz is now up and running.

The new web-based service, created by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the EEO Trust, is designed to link women with suitable skills and experience with board opportunities on Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The stated aims of the service are to:

- Connect women leaders with businesses seeking directors
- Provide information on corporate governance and “how to” tools
- Be a portal for women seeking a directorship role to register their interest
- Be a portal for businesses seeking independent directors to search for skilled people
- Promote good governance on the Boards of SMEs
- Identify and support emerging female leaders
- Staircase women directors through increasingly larger organisations.

Parts of the website are still under construction, but you can now register your details if you are seeking directorships on SME boards. We encourage you to go to the website and register by clicking on the ‘Woman Directors’ option.

The process for registering is relatively straightforward, but we think it is important to:

- Set aside time to complete your registration as fully as possible. Depending on your background, this could take between 15 to 40 minutes.
- Fill in all the fields in detail to make it easy for firms to get a complete picture of your skills, attributes and work record.
- Remember: whether a search of the database finds your name will depend on the information you put in.

Companies can search for women directors by clicking the ‘Company’ option.

The service is free. If you have any difficulties in registering on the website, the best person to contact is Julie Cooke on (09) 302-9916 or jcooke@chamber.co.nz

Congratulations to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the EEO Trust for creating and launching the service. We hope it will help raise the low participation rates of women in private sector governance.

Appointments of women to state sector boards and committees

Congratulations to all the women recently appointed to state sector boards and committees. They include:

Public Trust
Candis Craven

Dunedin International Airport Ltd
Kathy Grant

Learning Media Ltd
Lindsay Corban

Road Safety Trust
Yvonne Sharp

Northland DHB
Debbie Evans

Waitemata DHB
Mary Lythe
Gwen Tepania-Palmer

Auckland DHB
Juliet Walker

Counties Manukau DHB
Ruth DeSouza
Lope Ginnen

Waikato DHB
Sally Christie as deputy chair
Glenda Raumatī

Nelson Marlborough DHB
Judith Billens

Otago DHB
Susie Johnstone as deputy chair

*New Zealand Lawyers and
Conveyancers Disciplinary Tribunal*
Judge Dale Clarkson as chair

Human Rights Commission
Karen Johansen

Asia New Zealand Foundation
Ruth DeSouza

*Health Research Council of
New Zealand*
Kath Fox
Dr Susan Stott

Northern X Regional Ethics Committee
Jocelyn Byrd
Linda Kaye
Dr Vanya Kovach

Northern Y Regional Ethics Committee
Dr Adelaide Collins
Sanya Ram

*Upper Southern A Regional Ethics
Committee*
Liz Richards as chair
Alison Franklin
Dr Barbara Nicholas

*Upper Southern B Regional Ethics
Committee*
Dr Jane Cooper
Dr Melissa Copland

Central Regional Ethics Committee
Helen Colebrook as chair
Carolyn Collins
Dr Diana Martin
Hilary Stave

Film and Literature Board of Review
Dr Josephine Baddeley
Judy Callingham
Louise Carroll

*Alcohol Advisory Council of New
Zealand*
Anne Hobby
Dr Helen Moriarty

*New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement
Board of Inquiry*
Judge Shona Kenderdine as chair

A list that includes reappointments as well as new appointments is up on our website in the 'What's New?' section.

Invitations to apply directly for roles

You may have noted that the Service is now sending emails inviting you to apply directly for vacancies on boards and committees. For example, last year we emailed everyone on the database with a working email address about vacancies on the Parole Board.

We are usually inviting you to apply directly in cases where you will have to fill in an application form in addition to the CV the Service can provide on your behalf. In these situations it makes sense that you should apply directly, and the Service is not adding real value if we are simply supplying the same information again.

We are also using the process to quickly circulate opportunities that are outside the state sector (for example, board vacancies on NGOs).

The advantages in the process for you:

- You receive the same information about the opportunity as the Service does
- You are able to tailor your application form and CV appropriately for the role, as you know your skills and experience better than we do at the Service
- You will usually have more time to make a decision.

The disadvantage for you is there is usually more work involved in filling out application forms rather than the Ministry submitting a CV on your behalf.

This process is unlikely to ever totally replace our usual nominations process, (where we shortlist from the database, contact you about a vacancy, and put your name forward as a nominee). Some vacancies are not widely advertised and the requesting agency would not want us to widely contact possible candidates. In other cases, the requesting agency wants to shortlist and contact suitable candidates themselves.

We think this 'invite to apply' process is working well and are interested in your thoughts on it. Feedback to date has been positive, but we are concerned that some of you may feel 'application fatigue' – too much work putting in applications for too few results! Unfortunately appointments processes suffer from the same problems as a job application – too many candidates and only the one vacancy. You will need to decide whether it is worth your time and energy to pursue a given opportunity.

One thing to keep in mind – we have often seen registered women apply multiple times for roles before being selected for appointment. To put it frankly – "you have to be in to win." If you are suffering from 'application fatigue' though, do be in touch and we can talk through the issue with you.

Updating CVs

And please remember to keep your CV updated with us – just email us with any additions or amendments.

We are always happy to talk with you either by phone or in person about your CV and your potential for nomination. If you are going to be in Wellington and would like to meet, then give us a call on (04) 916-5814 to set it up.

The Team

Pamela Cohen
Nominations Manager
(04) 916 5849, email cohen@mwa.govt.nz

Sean Molloy
Nominations Advisor
(04) 916 5814, email molloy@mwa.govt.nz

Chris Gilman
Nominations Assistant
(04) 916-5824, email gilman@mwa.govt.nz

Joy Aberdein, and
Steve Hickey
Executive Assistants
(04) 916 5820, email noms@mwa.govt.nz

If you have any queries about the information in this newsletter, or the Nominations Service in general, please contact Sean or Pamela.

If you do not wish to receive *On Board* in future please email molloy@mwa.govt.nz with 'No thanks' in the subject line and we will take you off our mailing list.

The information contained in this e-mail message is intended for the addressee only and is not necessarily the official view or communication of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. If you are not the intended recipient you must not use, disclose, copy or distribute this message or the information in it. If you have received this message in error, please e-mail or telephone the sender immediately.