

More women on boards 'issue whose time has come'

Corporate Australia is experiencing significant change as the country seeks to build on its economic success by boosting the number of women on the country's private sector boards.

Over the last year, the number of women on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) top 200 boards has reached 11.7 percent, up from 8.7 percent in 2010. Women are now 31 percent of new appointments to ASX 200 boards, a 600 percent increase in one year. It is expected that women will hold 17 percent of ASX 200 board roles by the end of 2011.

By comparison, women make up just 9.3 percent of directors on the New Zealand Stock Market (NZSX) top 100 listed companies, a rate that puts New Zealand well behind other developed economies,

including those of Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States.

Last month, Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon Hekia Parata, and MWA Nominations Service Director, Pamela Cohen, went to Sydney to talk to some of Australia's top business leaders about what has been done to so significantly boost the number of women on private sector boards. Some of the leaders with whom the Minister and Pamela met were the chair of the ASX, David Gonski, the CEO of Goldman Sachs, Stephen Fitzgerald, and the CEO and Managing

Director of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Sir Ralph Norris.

Pamela said under ASX rules introduced last year, companies are required to set, and report on, measurable targets for the advancement of women into senior management and board roles.

'Business across the Tasman is responding positively because they see advantages for themselves in having more women in leadership. These changes are largely driven by male business leaders, who are building gender equality into the



'Business across the Tasman is responding positively because they see advantages for themselves in having more women in leadership. These changes are largely driven by male business leaders, who are building gender equality into the strategies of their companies.'

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Clear priorities for MWA

Kia ora koutou

The Ministry's priorities for New Zealand women in the next three years are:

- greater economic independence
- more women in leadership roles
- increased safety from violence.

These priorities have been confirmed by the Government and are set out in our recently released Statement of Intent (www.mwa.govt.nz/news-and-pubs/publications/soi-general).

Within the three broad priorities, the Ministry has developed a work programme that aims to deliver maximum relevance and impact for the taxpayer resources we use.

Our Statement of Intent reflects a renewed focus on our core role of policy advice. This means contributing to key government policy processes, where decisions will have significant impacts on women. A recent example is the policy work we are now part of following the report of the Welfare Working Group.

The Statement of Intent also includes some new areas of work for the Ministry, such as:

- the relationship between women's skills and women's economic outcomes – to answer the question of why women's increased qualifications are not translating into the improved economic outcomes we would expect to see for women
- how to reduce the level of violence against women overall, as well as to mitigate its effects. While effective response systems and ongoing support to victims are essential, we must lower – and eventually eliminate – the prevalence of violence. As the latest crime

statistics show, rates of violence against women continue to increase, despite government and community efforts to change this

- a focus on particular groups of women, such as young women and those at risk of revictimisation. Outcomes between women differ hugely, for example, between Māori and non-Māori women. Sometimes the differences between women are greater than those between women and men.

The Ministry will continue to develop our relationships with our partners for change. We need to work with and through others, within the public service, with women's and community organisations and increasingly with business.

I have been fortunate over the last few months to meet face-to-face with many individual women and many women's organisations. I have been impressed by the depth of understanding of the issues New Zealand women still face. Concern about violence is the issue most frequently raised with me.

I have also been impressed with how much energy and determination there still is amongst women to remove the remaining vestiges of gender inequality. I look forward to our joint success on achieving this!

Ngā mihi



Rowena
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Rowena Phair.

‘I have also been impressed with how much energy and determination there still is amongst women to remove the remaining vestiges of gender inequality.’

strategies of their companies. And the targets they are setting are often ambitious, with senior managers being offered incentives to achieve them. For example, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia has a target of 35 percent women in senior management roles by 2014 – and to achieve this, 65 percent of appointments over the next three years will need to be women.'

“New Zealand women can also promote change as individuals and collectively. They can use their positions as shareholders and employees to ask why the companies with which they are associated are not making full use of women’s skills, and they can join and support organisations that are working for change.”

Pamela said the trip to Australia was to talk directly to some of the key players; to understand why there has been such a dramatic change in the past 18 months; and to see how applicable their initiatives could be to New Zealand.

‘One of those leading the charge is Elizabeth Broderick, Australia’s Sex Discrimination Commissioner. She publicly called on the corporate sector to develop a regime of self-regulation and bring about real change in women’s participation at board level, or face quotas. She also brought together a male champions of change group, which includes 12 of Australia’s most influential men who are advocates and supporters of women’s leadership and some of whom we met with. There is a waiting list of business leaders seeking to join the champions group.

‘There is also an effective mentoring programme for board-ready women directors, which involves 56 of the top chairs in Australia.

‘It is significant that the change for more women in leadership is being pushed by the business leaders themselves, as they see the advantages, including better productivity and improved business performance. This was reinforced by some of the comments made to us at the meetings, for example, ‘this is an issue whose time has come’, and ‘if New Zealand can get male and female employment and productivity rates equalised, it will lift household incomes, and help New Zealand address future skills shortages and pension liabilities’.

Pamela said the Ministry of Women’s Affairs was currently leading a major push to gain greater business involvement in getting women into leadership here in New Zealand. Partner organisations include the New Zealand Shareholders’ Association and Chartered Secretaries New Zealand.



MWA Nominations Service Director, Pamela Cohen.

“It is significant that the change for more women in leadership is being pushed by the business leaders themselves, as they see the advantages, including better productivity and improved business performance.”

‘Helping to establish a champions group is certainly one of the options. The Australian experience also tells us that a range of stakeholders and investors need to demand change by the corporate sector.

‘New Zealand women can also promote change as individuals and collectively. They can use their positions as shareholders and employees to ask why the companies with which they are associated are not making full use of women’s skills, and they can join and support organisations that are working for change.’

It's not OK in any language

Ethnic leaders were encouraged to begin a conversation with their communities about family violence at a recent conference held by the Office of Ethnic Affairs.

The EthnicA Wellington conference held in early May was a significant pan-ethnic event which created a vibrant discussion on a number of topics. A session on family violence posed the question: 'Is family violence worse or just different in the ethnic sector?'

The panel consisted of Rowena Phair, Chief Executive, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Dr Ajit Swaran Singh, Manukau District Court Judge, Heather Henare, Chief Executive, Women's Refuge, and Priyanca Radhakrishnan from the women's support group, Shakti.

While family violence in ethnic communities is in some ways no different from that in the broader community, there are some issues that are unique to ethnic communities. These include: culture and identity; the migration experience; and isolation and alienation.

Dr Singh told the audience that cultural issues may have more of an impact on the victim of family violence than the actions of the abuser.

He pointed out that cultural traditions may affect how victims react to abuse. For instance, some cultural marriage practices require the bride to be 'given'



L to R: Dr Ajit Swaran Singh, Priyanca Radhakrishnan, Heather Henare and Rowena Phair.

to the groom's family – essentially making the bride a permanent member of her husband's family and making it impossible for her to return to her own family.

A woman who wants to lay a complaint will consider the impact her actions may have on her family – particularly on her family's position or reputation in their community.

Victims may also be isolated by language and a lack of networks. There may be no access to independent finances and a passport, and limited understanding of opportunities and support services.

MWA Chief Executive, Rowena Phair, highlighted some of the factors that can contribute to prevention of family violence in ethnic communities. The status of women in public and private spheres and the responses to perpetrators were major ones, she said.

'Women need to have economic independence, access to networks and support, and access to safe intervention. Research done by the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families (TAVF) showed that traditional roles, where men hold authority and control over women and where women are not seen as equals, support abuse.

Communities need to take responsibility for family violence, and hold perpetrators to account.'

'The responses to perpetrators must be swift and definite, with no leeway. Committing an act of violence is a choice, it cannot be blamed on poverty, culture, or stress. We will know we are making headway when violence is something that affects perpetrators' lives – when they need to manage the economic and social costs, rather than women managing these.'

A similar session was held at the Office of Ethnic Affairs' EthnicA conference in Auckland in April.

Judge Singh told delegates a story about a man to whom he was explaining why family violence was wrong. While he explained the law about family violence, Judge Singh noticed that the man was not really taking things in. But he saw that the man was religious, so he used that framework to help him understand why violence was wrong: 'God didn't give you hands to inflict violence', he said.

Continued over...



Other comments expressed in that session were:

- While culture does not in any way provide a justification for the perpetration of family violence, it needs to be considered when implementing initiatives, be they prevention, raising awareness or providing services.
- In small communities, victims of family violence fear easy identification and may not seek help because of feelings of shame and humiliation. There may be consequences for the whole family when a victim speaks up.
- Victims can be seen as 'abandoning' their family and bringing negative attention and shame to their community.
- Life after leaving an abusive relationship can be worse for some women. They may be unable to return to their communities, and lose support from their traditional networks.
- Communities need to take responsibility for family violence, and hold perpetrators to account.

The Office of Ethnic Affairs is embarking on further work in this area through its membership on the TAVF.

OEA Director, Mervin Singham, said male leaders and faith leaders were key to beginning the conversation in communities about family violence and to convey the message that family violence is not OK.

'Supporting women leaders to speak out as well will also normalise the conversation.'

Sexual violence victims urged to report to police

At the release in April of the latest New Zealand police crime statistics, victims of sexual violence were urged to report the offending to police.

The statistics were for the 2010 calendar year and, while total recorded crime was down, sexual assault and related offending increased by 3.6 percent in 2010 from the previous year, driven almost entirely by recorded family violence. In a public statement, Police said 'we know that most cases of sexual offending are not reported, and this remains a concern to police. We urge all victims of sexual offending to report it to police.'

The statement was no surprise to Ministry of Women's Affairs' senior policy analyst, Dr Denise Lievore, who led the Ministry's two-year sexual violence research project, *Strong and Safe Communities: Effective interventions for adult victim/survivors of sexual violence*.

Denise said many victims of sexual assault found the decision to report to police a difficult one.

'Some women are afraid of the offender and they want to protect family and whānau. Other barriers include women being afraid they will not be believed, they feel ashamed and embarrassed, they blame themselves, and not all women know that what happened to them is a crime.'

What the research also found, however, is that most women will tell a family

member or a friend about the assault. Denise said these people can be very influential on what happens next.

'If someone discloses to a friend or family member, it is critical that person encourages the victim to seek help from appropriate services, and to consider reporting to police. When we interviewed women for our study, many who reported to and were interviewed by police said they had received support and help. Police officers let the women know that they believed them, that they were not judging them, and they gave them information about their options.'

The statistics also showed that there were 655 more recorded family violence offences in 2010 compared to 2009. Police said encouraging people to report family violence and to seek help both as victims and offenders, was vital to breaking the cycle of family violence.

More information about the Ministry's sexual violence research project and the final reports are available on the Ministry's website at www.mwa.govt.nz/our-work/svrproject

The police statistics can be seen at www.police.govt.nz



Police said encouraging people to report family violence and to seek help both as victims and offenders, was vital to breaking the cycle of family violence.'

WOMEN ON THE MOVE

Dr Tangimoana Habib has been appointed as a new member of the Abortion Supervisory Committee.

Professor Dame Linda Holloway has been reappointed as chair of the committee and **Reverend Patricia Allan** has been reappointed as a member.

Helen Cull QC has been appointed as Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission.

The new Financial Markets Authority (FMA) began operating in May. FMA performs regulatory functions formerly undertaken by the Securities Commission and some of those of the Government Actuary and Companies Office. **Shelley Cave**, **Mary Holm**, and **Justine Smyth** are board members. **Rebecca Eele** is an associate member.

Associate Professor Anne Kolbe has been appointed as chair of the National Health Committee.

Paula Rebstock and **Jill Spooner** have been appointed to the ACC Board.

Members of the Advisory Board to the Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Trust include **Jane Huria** and **Pamela Richardson**.

Kate Davenport has been appointed as a member and the deputy chairperson of the Real Estate Agents Disciplinary Tribunal.

Maureen Leong has been reappointed and **Esther Fung**, **Justine Kohing**, and **Susan Wong** have been appointed as Trustees of the Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust. The Trust aims to create a heightened understanding of the Chinese community within New Zealand and to strengthen the unique identity of Chinese New Zealanders.

The Dairy Women's Network has created a new full-time Chief Executive role. **Sarah Speight** starts in the new role this month.



Ministry has clear priorities

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has three clear priorities: to increase women's economic independence; to increase the number of women in leadership; and to enable women to lead secure lives, free from violence.

Within these broad priorities the Ministry has developed a work programme that aims to deliver maximum relevance and impact for the taxpayer resources we use.

The Ministry's Statement of Intent for 2011–2014 provides a high-level outline of how we will go about achieving our priorities.

To read the SOI, please go to www.mwa.govt.nz/news-and-pubs/publications/soi-general

‘As Minister I want more for Aotearoa New Zealand and more for all women of our diverse communities.’

Hon Hekia Parata
Minister of Women's Affairs



Thanks for sharing your views

Thanks to everyone who took part in our Panui reader survey. Overall the results were positive, with the most valued content being stories looking at issues for women in New Zealand (84% of those surveyed rated this content 4 or 5 out of 5). The results will be used as part of a wider review of our communications that will be undertaken shortly.

We need more women engineers

New Zealand needs more engineers, and there are concerted efforts being made to encourage more women into the engineering profession.

A report prepared by the Department of Labour and the Institution of Professional Engineers in New Zealand (IPENZ) in 2009 suggested that an additional 1700 to 1800 engineers would be required per year over the next five years. Women currently represent less than 13 percent of the profession, and women who have trained as engineers tend to not stay in the profession. Increasing the number of women entering and remaining in the profession will help provide the additional engineers that New Zealand needs.

Ministry of Women's Affairs staff worked with IPENZ staff to develop *The Retention and Renewal of Women in Engineering: An IPENZ Plan to encourage diversity in and sustainability of the engineering profession*, which was launched earlier this year. Minister of Women's Affairs Hon Hekia Parata was guest speaker at the official launch of the plan. The Minister said it fitted well with 'ensuring women are fully engaged in the economy, which is one of the Government's key priorities'.

IPENZ policy advisor and Project Manager, Women in Engineering, Tracey Ayre says women are not becoming engineers for some reason and are joining other professions instead. Engineering lags well behind other professions such as architecture, science, accounting, law, and medicine in attracting women to take it up.

'We have conducted research which shows that girls perform just as well, if not slightly better, than boys in Year 13 mathematics with calculus, physics, and chemistry. Similarly, at university, females perform just as well as their male counterparts, so their ability is not an issue. If engineering is to employ the best and brightest, then it needs to review why it loses, or fails to attract, graduates of both genders.'

The Retention and Renewal of Women in Engineering includes a number of actions to improve the number of women in engineering. These include:

- Research – to investigate the barriers to women remaining and advancing in engineering, explore the economic benefits of diversity in the engineering profession, and investigate subject choices of female students
- Leadership – to identify learning opportunities for engineers
- Culture – showcasing good employer practices
- Recognition – the celebration of senior women in the profession.

The Ministry will continue to work with IPENZ over the next six months as it undertakes case study research to unpick what the barriers are to women remaining and advancing in engineering. The findings from the research will be used to look at how those barriers can be addressed so that women who graduate in engineering can use their skills to the best of their ability. With the projected ongoing skill shortages facing the engineering profession, enabling more women to progress their careers in this field can only be good news for the New Zealand economy.



Garry Macdonald, Immediate Past President of IPENZ and Hon Hekia Parata, Minister of Women's Affairs.



Tracey Ayre.

“The Ministry will continue to work with IPENZ over the next six months as it undertakes case study research to unpick what the barriers are to women remaining and advancing in engineering.”

Closing the gender pay gap

As part of its work programme, the Ministry of Women's Affairs is working to increase the number of women in male-dominated occupations. The New Zealand labour market is highly gendered, with about half of all men and women working in occupations where 70 percent or more of workers in that occupation are of the same gender. This segregation is one of the reasons for the gender pay gap (the difference in the median hourly pay of men and women), which currently sits at 10.6 percent.

2011 Mothers' Index

Save the Children's annual Mothers' Index, released in May, puts New Zealand at the sixth best place in the world to be a mother.

The Index analyses health, education, and economic conditions for women and children in 164 countries, and found Norway the best place in the world to be a mother; maternal and child mortality rates are low, women's life expectancy and years in school are high, and the average maternity leave is about one year. By contrast, the worst place in the world to be a mother is Afghanistan, where women have a life expectancy of 45 years – the world's lowest – and one of every 11 women die in childbirth. One of every five children in the country does not live to age five.

The full report is available at www.savethechildren.org

Green paper on children

A new Green Paper on Children is the first part of a process to develop a Children's Action Plan. The Green Paper, which will be available in August, is intended to stimulate a national conversation about how we value, nurture, and protect children in New Zealand. Following a widespread consultation process on the Green Paper, a White Paper that sets out a Children's Action Plan will be developed. The Children's Action Plan will include all children aged 0–18 years, with a special focus on children aged under five years.

To see the Minister of Social Development's press release go to www.beehive.govt.nz/release/green-paper-puts-priority-children

New research on Asian, refugee, and migrant mental health

Te Pou, New Zealand's National Centre of Mental Health Research, Information and Workforce Development, has recently released two new research reports on Asian, refugee, and migrant mental health and addiction. The reports have implications for service delivery, therapy, and workforce development in New Zealand.

One report is *Developing culturally responsive services for working with refugee youth with mental health concerns* and the other is *Building evidence for better practice in support for Asian mental wellbeing: An exploratory study*.

To see the reports go to www.tepou.co.nz

Victims of sexual violence to receive more support

New entitlements for victims of sexual violence and serious crime were announced by the Minister of Justice, Hon Simon Power, in May. They are:

- A new court attendance grant of \$100 per day for both victims of sexual violence and their unpaid support person. Currently, victims of sexual violence can be paid for the time they spend testifying as a witness, but not for attending the rest of the trial.
- An expanded travel assistance scheme of up to \$1,000 for victims of serious crime for justice-related travel, for example, attending post-sentence restorative justice conferences, travel to court education for young victims, travel to meet victims advisors pre-trial, or travel to coronial hearings where a person has died as a result of a criminal act.
- A means-tested emergency grant of up to \$2,000 for economically disadvantaged victims of serious crime, including sexual assault. The grant will fund special assistance such as emergency accommodation, supplying security locks, trauma counselling, and relocation costs for victims of serious crime who have no way of supporting their own healing and recovery.

The older population

A new report from the Ministry of Social Development presents the results of research on the future economic contribution of the older population. *The Business of Ageing: Realising the Economic Potential of Older People in New Zealand: 2011-2051* highlights the potential of older people. The report finds that:

- more older people will participate in the workforce
- the economic value of older people's paid and unpaid work will increase
- older people's contribution to tax revenue will increase
- the mature consumer market will become more important.

The report is available at www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/business-of-ageing/index.html

Pānui is published by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, New Zealand www.mwa.govt.nz

Editor: Jayne McCullum **Design:** Gusto

For all database enquiries including new subscriptions, updates and/or amendments, email: mwa@mwa.govt.nz

For feedback, ideas and editorial enquiries contact: The Editor, *Pānui*, Ministry of Women's Affairs, PO Box 10 049, Wellington 6143, New Zealand or email: mwa@mwa.govt.nz

The viewpoints expressed in *Pānui* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.


MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS
MINITATANGA MŌ NGĀ WĀHINE

newzealand.govt.nz