

# WORK

**equality**families**justice**education**violence**work**safety**power**leadership**training**communities**health

## Introduction

***Strategies that recognise the various positions of women and men in the labour market and the reasons for them can both improve prospects and rewards for women and contribute to economic development in communities and regions.***

Development of effective strategies to improve women's employment requires recognition of the factors that affect women's capacity to supply labour and those affecting demand for that labour to produce goods and services. Women's greater share of household and family work affects the amount of time they are available to undertake paid work and can also affect preparedness to undertake education and training and to seek higher level jobs. Women's absences from paid work for maternity and child care are now briefer, and workforce participation has increased, with better opportunities for gaining experience, skills, and higher level jobs. In 2001, slightly more than 50 per cent of all women in NSW with children aged 0–4 were in the workforce.<sup>1</sup> Improvement in the education levels of girls and women has significantly extended the range of jobs women can enter.

The increasing importance of service industries has reduced the labour market disadvantage women often faced in traditionally male dominated industries such as manufacturing, agriculture, mining and construction. Improvements in communication technologies have also reduced the labour market disadvantages of living outside major industrial centres. Mechanisation and computerisation have increased possible job choices for women.

While around a third of women work in occupations that are 80 per cent or more female dominated, the proportion of

workplaces Australia-wide in which women were less than 10 per cent of employees fell between 1990 and 1995 (most recent data available).<sup>2</sup>

### OVERALL

Women continue to experience discrimination in the workforce especially in relation to pregnancy and maternity and through sex-based harassment. For many women, the attempt to balance work and home responsibilities can lead to a heavy load of stress, worry and tiredness, long hours and more limited career and job opportunities. Flexible working hours (32 per cent) and permanent part time work (23 per cent) are the most frequently used provisions to balance work and family, with 53 per cent of families with at least one parent employed using a flexible work practice. 68 per cent of working mothers use family work provisions compared with 27 per cent of working fathers. Fathers are more likely to use shift work, work at home or flexible working hours and women are more likely to opt for part-time work.<sup>3</sup>

Women's access to employment is directly related to industry development and varies from region to region. Women in the Inner Sydney region have the highest labour force participation rate of 64.3 per cent. In the country, women's highest labour force participation rate is in the Murray-Murrumbidgee region (59.3 per cent).

Women's labour market participation rates are lowest in the Fairfield Liverpool region (45.6 per cent) and in the Northern, Far West-North Western and Central West regions (45.6 per cent). This compares to a State average women's labour force participation rate of 53.6 per cent.

Only 12.8 per cent of all employed women in NSW are in the three regions (Richmond, Tweed and Mid North Coast, Northern, Far Western and Central West, and Murray-Murrumbidgee) outside the Sydney Newcastle Wollongong coastal strip.

The unemployment rate for women in NSW overall is 5.2 per cent. In some regions it is much higher than this. Women's unemployment rate in the Richmond, Tweed and Mid North Coast region is 7.6 per cent, in the Illawarra and Southeast region is 7.1 per cent and in the Hunter region is 7 per cent. All rural regions have a higher women's unemployment rate than the State average, with the exception of the Murray-Murrumbidgee region, which has an unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent for women.<sup>4</sup>

Specific features of women's labour market position include:

- ◆ Lower workforce participation – women are less likely to be in the paid workforce and more likely to have discontinuous employment; more likely to be in part time or casual or part-year work
- ◆ Concentration in particular occupations, industries and workplaces
- ◆ Lower levels and different kinds of post-school qualifications
- ◆ Lower levels of earnings and benefits from employment.

There have been some significant improvements in women's labour market position.

### **More women than ever before have a paid job.**

Women have increased their workforce participation from 36 per cent in 1966 to 54.1 per cent in 2002.<sup>5</sup> Women are now 43.87 per cent of the workforce. There is now almost no difference between the workforce participation rate for married women and all women. Women's unemployment rate (5.2 per cent) is lower than men's (5.4 per cent).<sup>6</sup>

### **It is now well accepted that women have a legitimate place in the paid workforce**

Over two thirds of people believe that both men and women should contribute to household earnings, and only a quarter said it is the husband's job to earn the money. Paid employment of mothers is the biggest factor in reducing child poverty according to the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM). <http://www.natsem.canberra.edu.au>

### **Discrimination (especially direct) is increasingly unacceptable**

Few jobs are out of bounds for women. There has been a decline in male-only workplaces. While the under-representation of women in some occupations reflects less access to opportunities in the workforce, perhaps it's the particular occupations and the bases of exclusion from them that matter rather than occupational segregation as such.

### **There has been a significant improvement in women's education levels especially in professions.**

The proportion of those with post school qualifications increased from 26 per cent of women and 38 per cent of men in 1982 to 51 per cent of men and 47.4 per cent of women in 2001. The main difference is in the 45+ age groups, where women have much lower levels of degree-level qualifications. Women (3 per cent) are much less likely than men (19 per cent) to have skilled vocational qualifications.<sup>7</sup>

Women and men in the 15–64 age group have identical participation rates in education overall, with 16 per cent attending educational institutions. The school retention rate for girls in NSW in 2001 was around 10 per cent higher than for boys.<sup>8</sup>

Women make up 42.2 per cent of all workers in NSW employed in the most highly skilled category of occupations,<sup>9</sup> just slightly below their share of all jobs.

### Greater workforce flexibility

There are more varied employment arrangements and flexible hours including in contract work and small business, and part time and casual work. Some of this flexibility does not necessarily support women's participation and progress in the workforce.

42.7 per cent of all employed women in NSW work part-time compared to around 14.7 per cent of men.<sup>10</sup> In 1997, about a quarter of women working on a part-time, casual or temporary basis said they did so for family reasons; no men gave this as a reason for choosing these forms of employment.<sup>11</sup>

Some women working part time would like to work more hours. In September 2000, 71,700 women in NSW worked part-time and wanted more hours compared to 51,300 men. Under-employed women part-time workers outnumbered men in NSW by 20,400. About 5.2 per cent of all women employed in NSW in September 2000 worked part-time and wanted to work more hours, compared to about 2.9 per cent of men.<sup>12</sup> In 2001, 28.2 per cent of all women employed in NSW received no leave entitlements.<sup>13</sup>

Increasingly women are seeking work/family choices within the workforce, rather than outside it. In 2000, 42 per cent of women were entitled to some paid maternity leave, (although the basis of the entitlement and the duration of the leave are unknown).<sup>14</sup> In 2001/2002, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board received 850 enquiries regarding carer's responsibility discrimination.<sup>15</sup>

More detail on women's workforce position is provided in the work and family paper at [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au).

## Our commitments

- ❖ In consultation with employers and employees, implement *Pay Equity Inquiry Report* recommendations for reviews of female-dominated industries such as clothing industry outworkers, child care workers, hairdressers, beauty therapists and seafood processors. Working women in these traditionally underpaid sectors could benefit from better conditions under the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.
- ❖ Amend the *Anti Discrimination Act* to include family responsibilities. This will recognise that many carers, particularly women, are unfairly disadvantaged in the workforce when they try to balance work and family commitments. A Labor Government will make it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of family responsibilities.
- ❖ Amend the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* to give long-term permanent casual workers (who have worked more than two years for an employer) access to maternity leave provisions.
- ❖ Review the maternity and parental leave entitlements provisions under the *Industrial Relations Act* in light of changing labour market trends.
- ❖ Introduce the *NSW Fair Clothing Industry Strategy*, a joint initiative of WorkCover NSW and the Department of Fair Trading. The strategy has four parts: the introduction of new clothing industry-specific legislation; a consumer education campaign; continuing enforcement activity by the Department of Industrial Relations and WorkCover to encourage and monitor compliance; and an outworker information campaign to involve workers as partners in industry reform.
- ❖ Continue to fund the Working Women's Centre at Parramatta to provide information, support and advice to women on work-related matters.

- ◆ Maintain funding for the *Women in Business Mentor Program* that has proven very successful in producing commercial success and professional outcomes for both mentors and mentorees.
- ◆ Develop a series of free forums for women in small business, covering subjects such as Structuring for Growth; Achieving the Transition from Sole Trader to Employer; Electronic Commerce; and Expanding Your Customer Base through Exporting.
- ◆ Undertake a survey of home-based business in NSW to obtain information on the nature of these businesses. Information published in 1997 indicates that 47 per cent of women in small business in Australia operate from home.
- ◆ Seek to increase to 50 per cent the proportion of women recruits to the Police Service at each intake.
- ◆ Undertake recruitment campaigns to increase the representation of women across the emergency services.
- ◆ Continue to support the Spokeswomen's Program, which has successfully promoted equal employment opportunities for women public sector employees.
- ◆ Give priority to supporting training, development and workshop programs for young women entering the popular music industry.
- ◆ Continue funding Playworks – National Centre for Women Performance Writers.
- ◆ Explore the potential for establishing a mentoring program in the arts for indigenous women.

## What we are doing

### PROMOTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND INDEPENDENCE, INCLUDING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT, APPROPRIATE WORKING CONDITIONS AND CONTROL OVER ECONOMIC RESOURCES

The Department for Women has drawn together information and strategies relevant to women's employment generation in NSW to create the Jobs for Women Strategy, to provide an overview and context for the Department's work on jobs for women. The Strategy contains background information on employment trends and issues for women, an overview of the Government's approach and activities on jobs for women, initiatives undertaken by the Department around the state on jobs for women (including several broad new strategies oriented to regional job generation and small business initiatives). It also contains IT initiatives for business, for young women and the community sector. The Strategy has been published on the Department's website, [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au).

Many working women, particularly those from marginalised or disadvantaged groups, are not members of trade unions that provide specialised information, advice, support and advocacy services. The Department for Women provides \$100,000 annually to the NSW Working Women's Centre to provide a core information and advisory service to women throughout the state on industrial relations and employment related issues in the NSW industrial relations jurisdiction to increase women workers' understanding of rights and obligations under industrial relations and anti-discrimination legislation, and their awareness of the benefits of union membership.

The service provides industrial, anti-discrimination, and occupational health and safety information legislation to non-

unionised working women throughout NSW, particularly women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal women. The Centre provides advocacy services to redress directly unfair or discriminatory treatment in the workplace, or provide referral to the relevant union, a legal advice service or government agency. Community relations programs and specific industry projects to assist in addressing identified needs are also conducted.

In 2001/2002 the WWC is involved in a community education program, in partnership with TAFE Outreach, local government and community organisations, to deliver workshops and seminars for service providers including community legal centres, unions, chambers of commerce, local government and community based organisations. Specific seminars on bullying and harassment and paid maternity leave were held. The Centre receives around 400 queries a quarter, mostly regarding dismissal/redundancy, remuneration, conditions of employment and maternity entitlements, and manages ongoing cases.

The Department for Women provided \$41,150 under the 2001 Women's Grants Program to the NSW Federation of Housing Associations for an innovative project to retain more women in senior positions in the community housing sector. The *Executive Officer Management Short Course* focused on change management skills for managers of not-for-profit community services organisations with volunteer boards of management. Fifteen women managers of community housing organisations attended the interactive course, which included case studies drawn from housing associations. Participants appreciated networking and knowledge sharing during the course, and ongoing peer support networks were established.

## INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

Indigenous women in NSW have a lower workforce participation rate (33.1 per cent in 1996) than indigenous men and lower than NSW women in general. Unionisation is low, and there is often little knowledge of sound employment practices and entitlements in the community organisations that employ many indigenous women and men.

The Department for Women provided \$80,000 under the 1997-98 Women's Grants Program to the Working Women's Centre to promote equitable, safe and responsive workplaces for indigenous women. A booklet providing basic information on sound employment practices for community organisations, highlighting issues such as industrial awards and agreements, recruitment of staff, EEO and discrimination, OH&S and family-friendly work practices, has been developed and should be available from the WWC in the second half of 2002. Models developed from recent indigenous women's employment projects and analysis of issues round indigenous women's employment in the current labour market context will inform policy development in this area by government agencies including the Department for Women's Aboriginal Women's Business Unit.

Indigenous people are over-represented in lower paid and temporary positions in the public sector. The office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment (ODEOPE) coordinates the *Employment and Career Development Program*, which gives indigenous people the opportunity to gain tertiary qualifications and enter careers in the public service, thus providing the service with qualified indigenous people to fill policy, professional service delivery and leadership roles.

This five-year partnership between Premier's Department and the Federal Departments of Employment and Workplace Relations, and Education, Science and Training, funded with \$1.3 million from DEWR, has a target of 100 cadetships in its first 3 years. Of the 30 first round recruits to cadetship positions in 13 NSW Government agencies now in tertiary study, 40 per cent are women. In 2003, the program will cover technical as well as professional occupations, and 30 more cadetships will be available. Further details are available on ODEOPE's website [www.eeo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au).

### MIGRANT WOMEN

The skills of migrant women are often not recognised in Australian workplaces or in the community generally, and newly arrived migrant women may not have the self esteem or support networks to seek opportunities. With funding of \$19,980 from the 2000 Women's Grants Program, the Griffith Adult Learning Association undertook a project to help women from migrant communities wanting to re-enter the workforce to recognise and document prior learning and existing skills and gain new workforce-related skills. The *Skills Development for Migrant Women* project identified needs and provided training in resume writing, job seeking skills and use of computers and the Internet. A support network was established and participants referred to appropriate employers or employment agencies. Social interactions and cohesion between women from diverse backgrounds were increased, and participants gained a better awareness of the Australian labour market and workforce and how to identify and access relevant training to increase their employability. One participant got a job in a child care centre and started her diploma course in Child Care Studies on completion of her first aid course.

There were also successful outcomes from the \$18,690 St George & Sutherland Community College project, *English for Living*, which developed and ran a 20-week work-related training course for unemployed women from non-English speaking backgrounds. Work experience placements were obtained, and a Mentoring scheme was run in partnership with the Australian Federation of University Women, Southern Suburbs Group. *English for Living* participants were paired with retired, university trained professional women who acted as career development advisors, helped with the selection of suitable academic courses and in some cases developed lasting contact. Ten of the original 16 women completed the full 20-week course. Four women found employment before completing the course (two as a direct result of successful work experience placements) and two left to continue their English studies at the University of NSW.

People from non-English speaking backgrounds are under-represented in the public sector. The Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment runs the Migrant Career Development Program to increase opportunities for people with qualifications and skills from non-English speaking countries to find careers in the NSW Public Service. NSW government agencies are given an incentive payment of \$5,000 to provide six month work experience placements for skilled migrants from outside the public sector. In 2001/2002, there were 260 applicants for the program, 41 per cent of them women, and 53 per cent of the 34 placements made are women.

The Department for Women provided \$20,268 from the 2001 Women's Grants Program to the Western Sydney Community Forum for the *Western Sydney Migrant Women Food and Business Project* to develop a business proposal to apply for

GROW funding for a training and small business 'incubator' for NESB women in Western Sydney. The Forum is carrying out initial research and a feasibility study into establishing catering for small business, including identifying necessary skills and training including small business skills, and investigating business opportunities available. Useful resources currently available in the community are being identified, and a partnership formed with TAFE to enlist women participants and design and deliver appropriate training.

### WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities are under-represented in the NSW public sector. The Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment runs a program providing traineeships in NSW public sector agencies to people with a disability. Program sponsors include the NSW Office of the Public Trustee, the NSW Motor Accidents Authority, the NSW Department of Education and Training, the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, the Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. The program fully funds host employers for the award wage and allowances for the traineeship. Trainees enter into a training contract with the employer and undertake training that leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

In 2002, 21 of the 38 traineeships offered were to women with disabilities.

### YOUNG WOMEN

Current trends suggest that up to forty per cent of women will never marry, and that only one Australian woman in twelve will be supported by another person for the course of her life. Young women need to learn the financial management skills to achieve

economic independence. From March 1999, the Department for Women worked with Creative Brands (manufacturers of Australis cosmetics) and individual high schools throughout the state to run workshops encouraging girls and young women to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The *Australis Self-made Girl Program* for girls and young women aged 15–18 in regional, rural and remote NSW, was designed to increase access to educational and leadership programs in rural and regional areas, and build links between younger and older women within communities. The Department for Women, in partnership with businesswomen's organisations and other community agencies that work with young women, is developing a new program, Girl\$avvy, to build on the success of Australis. Girl\$avvy is designed to help young women focus on the concept of economic empowerment and to motivate them towards financial independence, through fun and activities, working alongside successful businesswomen from a range of industries. Private sector sponsorship is currently being sought and the program will be piloted in late 2002/early 2003.

While girls outperform boys at school, their longer term work outcomes are not as good. In 2000/2001 the Department for Women worked with Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, Women in Vocational Education, the Women's Electoral Lobby and the Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment to highlight this problem with educators and produce accessible employment-related resources for lower-achieving girls leaving school. With funding from the Australian National Training Authority funding, the successful *Jobs for the Girls: the Realities for Young Women* conference for educators was held in mid 2000, and an employment-focused 'teen' magazine for young women, *Wizegirls*, profiling a number of young women in different jobs and offering useful and realistic

advice to assist in job seeking, was developed by Streetwize Comics. A classroom-learning guide to accompany the magazine was also developed.

*Wizegirls* was launched at Crows Nest Campus, Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, on Wednesday 7 March 2001. Speakers included Rachel Gully, DFW staff member at Orange and NSW Trainee of the Year for 2000, also featured as a case study in the magazine. The magazine was launched again at Coonamble High School by Neita Scott of the Premier's Council for Women during the Women on Wheels (WOW) tour in May 2001, and distributed to girls in rural schools as part of WOW Tours in 2001 and 2002. Overall, 80,000 copies were distributed through school, TAFE and community networks.

### WOMEN WORKING IN THE ARTS

Under its 2002 Cultural Grants Program, the NSW Ministry for the Arts has funded a number of initiatives supporting women working in the arts. \$2,600 was provided to the Sydney Improvised Music Association Inc. (SIMA) for the Sandy Evans Workshops for Year 11 and 12 girls considering becoming jazz musicians and auditioning for the NSW Conservatorium's Jazz Studies Program. The workshops are a trial program to improve the gender imbalance in the cohort of Jazz Studies students and women taking up jazz as a career. Ongoing funding would enhance career opportunities for women jazz musicians and young women wishing to become jazz and improvising musicians, in line with the Government's policy commitment to give priority to supporting training, development and workshop programs for young women entering the popular music industry. The first of two workshops was held on 25 May

2002 with the limited available places oversubscribed

Since 1992, the Ministry for the Arts has given \$209,983 through its grants program to Playworks, the National Centre for Women Performance Artists, a national network supporting women writing for theatre and performance. Playworks offers a range of services including script development, mentorships, forums and publications for women writers and workshops offering opportunities to engage with other practitioners and explore approaches to writing. In 2002 Playworks received \$23,000, as well as auspiced funding for two projects: \$1,800 for *Rood Screen* by Donna Abela and \$4,700 to Much Ado Productions towards *Kokoschka's Doll*. Further information on the Cultural Grants Program is available at <http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/Guidelines/guidelines.htm>.

The Ministry for the Arts has funded the biennial Women and Arts Fellowship, awarded to assist a woman with her professional development as an artist, since 1985. The Fellowship, available to eligible women resident in New South Wales, has been increased to \$30,000, exceeding both the Writers Fellowship and the History Fellowship. The Fellowship recognises the valuable contribution of women artists and celebrates their creativity. Imaginative and innovative proposals are encouraged and the guidelines are flexible with regard to the nature of the proposal for which the fellowship may be granted. The Fellowship may be used for professional research, to undertake a particular arts project to benefit the professional development of the applicant or put towards further study or training, particularly for courses not readily available in Australia or where expertise gained might benefit other women working in the arts in this State. Twenty women have benefited from the award to date, and the next Fellowship will be offered

in 2003. Further information on the Fellowship is available through <http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/Guidelines/Fellowships>.

In Brewarrina, the Northern Star Aboriginal Corporation is using Women's Grants Program funding on a successful community project called *Images of Murdi Women in Bre'*. This project involved collection and collation of photographic images of Aboriginal women in Brewarrina by working with six Community Development Employment Program participants over 25 years old. The women involved in the 10–12 month project received training in photography, developing creative skills, working collaboratively with a team of photographers and making group decisions culminating in an exhibition. The photographic exhibition *Mukatinj Ngari (Women: now in time, here in place)* was opened October 2002 at Brewarrina's local gallery and the photographs will also be exhibited during NAIDOC week. The community photographic archive will also be extended and the opportunity to create a small business developed.

### WOMEN IN RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW

Employment opportunities for women are limited in many rural areas, and disadvantaged young women already engaging in other risky behaviour may not see employment and career development as a legitimate or feasible option. Coupled with the high rate of depression in both young women and men in rural communities, this may have major impacts on their overall health and quality of life. Low self esteem and lack of appropriate role models and mentors translate into less understanding of what to do to move into a career or participate in their community.

Building on earlier Department for Women work with the Central West Community College to develop women's

employment opportunities in the Central Western region of NSW, the Premier's Department Western Regional Co-ordination Program received \$33,828 under the *Regional Service Delivery Plan* for an intensive six month Women's Employment Project in the first half of 2002 in two communities in the Central West, Oberon and Kelso, a suburb of Bathurst. The project involves work with young women 'at risk' in the 15–24 years age group who are not employed or actively involved in their community, to develop strategies for employment and a model framework for other communities to use to strengthen support mechanisms and improve service delivery to help young women to be more actively involved in their communities.

Project research identified geographical, cultural, political and economical differences between Kelso and Oberon and a number of common elements preventing young women from viewing employment and career development as a legitimate or feasible option. The young women were not seen as competitive in local employment markets because they were not 'job-ready', with low motivation, few basic qualifications and skills, and did not present well. Sixteen young women are attending a specially tailored three hours per week course conducted by Western Institute of TAFE at Oberon High School covering basic computing, self-esteem and completion of job applications, and should graduate on 20 November 2002. The Kelso course, which began on 4 June 2002 with an enrolment of 12 young single mothers, was designed to teach them about computers in a relaxed, non-conventional way, to increase confidence and commitment and encourage them to enrol in future courses. The Bathurst Police and Community Youth Club provided free transport, and free child care was provided. Following an enthusiastic response to the short course, Western Institute of

TAFE is running a three hours per week program at Kelso Public School until the end of the 2002 school year. Initial indicators suggest that the project is increasing the young women's motivation and confidence to explore alternative options, and encouraging increased involvement of local service providers and community with the young women and the project.

The Department for Women provided \$12,607 under the 2001 Women's Grants Program to the Hunter Community Program for a Women and Work project at Windale, to provide community peer support and small group training opportunities for women to improve opportunities for employment, individual and family health, community participation and family support. Training in Confidence Building for Job Searching and Decision-Making (including learning to learn, time management, learning strategies, collaborative goal setting) was provided for two hours a week over a ten-week period. Conclusion of the project was marked by presentation of certificates to participants on 5 July 2002.

Women's capacity for economic self-sufficiency through standard employment is impacted by family commitments, time away from paid employment for child rearing and lack of suitable training opportunities. Self-employment can also be limited by the cost of advertising services and micro-businesses. The Umbrella Group (TUG), a project conducted by the Armidale and District Women's Centre with funding of \$19,618 from the 2000 Women's Grants Program explored alternative work opportunities, developing databases of participating employers and women seeking alternative work opportunities. Participants received information and advice and a start-up fund to develop their own ideas for alternative work opportunities. A number of successful micro-business ventures resulted, and a strong ongoing network was formed amongst

participants. A booklet describing the project, including a guide to identifying, developing and implementing alternative work opportunities, has been developed and distributed.

With Women's Grants Program funding of \$51,350, the Broken Hill Multicultural Women's Resource and Information Centre worked with the Far West Regional Council of Adult and Community Education to conduct a Vocational Guidance and Career Planning Course for local women from diverse cultural backgrounds, to improve their chances of gaining employment in the Far West NSW region. Training covering computers, office procedures, resume writing, first aid, and basic aged care and child care skills, was provided for two days a week over a 12 month period. When the 16 women graduated from the program, Broken Hill's first vocational training course for multicultural women, in November 2001, several had already found jobs.

The Armidale Development Corporation, in partnership with New England Institute of TAFE, the University of New England, women's organisations across the region and the New England Women Linking in New Communities (NEWLinC) obtained \$99,840 under the 2000 Women's Grants Program to establish a virtual community and training forum for rural and regional women. The project provided training in basic IT tools including email, discussion boards, on-line forums and chat to improve access to information and services and conduct of skills workshops in networking and build 'virtual communities' among rural/remote women using communications software on the web.

As well as training women in rural and regional areas to use the internet, the NewLinC project has focused on e-business needs, identified aspects of IT women need to know more about, and set about establishing a network to provide these services.

The website [www.newlinc.com.au](http://www.newlinc.com.au) launched in March 2001 facilitates development of business ideas leading to greater economic opportunities for women in the New England Region, their families and their local communities through the information and discussion boards provided. A new non-profit organisation supporting women's online learning, Networking Women's Learning (NewLinC), has grown out of the project and was launched in March 2002.

Economically disadvantaged women in Sydney's outer suburbs can easily become socially isolated. Under the 2000 Women's Grants Program, Barnardos Penrith and Family Centre Cranebrook received \$15,071 to establish an Internet Café for isolated disadvantaged women. Working with TAFE and local businesses, the project provided training in computer and Internet use, to help the women to access the Internet for information, communication, bill paying and job networks. Training was also provided in operating espresso coffee machines and cash registers to increase employability, and work experience placements arranged. Employability was also enhanced by involvement in managing the community based Internet Café, launched in December 2001. Child care was provided through the neighbouring child care centre, and participants were also able to participate in supported playgroups to increase parenting skills and self-esteem, and to learn to organise and conduct playgroups. Eight women were trained to operate playgroups, and the three playgroups established are now operating independently.

A pilot project in Western Sydney, undertaken by MetroScreen in partnership with Hawkesbury Skills, Artsnet, Western Sydney ITEC and Wesley Mission, with funding of \$89,750 from the 2001 Women's Grants Program, focused on skills development

and work placements to increase employment opportunities in digital media and IT areas and to generate self-employment opportunities. Participants (including young unemployed women, migrant women, and older women returning to the workforce) were trained in digital media and business studies for five hours a day over a 20-week period. The program was structured to suit women with family commitments, with provision made for child care for pre-school aged children.

The NSW Dental Assistants Professional Association received \$30,000 under the 2001 Women's Grants Program to provide accredited Certificate Dental Assistant Level III training, with support and follow-up for women in metropolitan and regional areas through the Internet and a 1800 number. The project targeted indigenous women, women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and socio-economically disadvantaged women. Basic training was completed in February 2002, a two-day Infection Control workshop was held in Sydney in March 2002 and Certificate III training will conclude in December 2002. The project has delivered real employment outcomes, with 75 per cent of women participants now employed in dental surgeries in the Sydney Metropolitan area.

### MATURE WOMEN

The 21st century workforce will be older, and will not necessarily exit the paid workforce at 55 or 60. Employers will need to re-assess the value of recruiting and retaining employees over the age of 45 years. The Women's Equity Bureau of the Department of Industrial Relations is currently scoping an initiative to extend policy options regarding mature age workers, retirement options and workforce issues faced by the ageing workforce over the next 10 years. Initial literature

searching has been undertaken, and consultations with other relevant agencies and academics will be undertaken.

Corporate Partners for Change is a unique partnership between the NSW Office of Western Sydney, industry, unions and the community to help unemployed people in Western Sydney make the transition into the workforce. While it has a strong focus on young people it has been particularly successful in creating skilled jobs and career paths for women returning to the workforce, particularly in southwest Sydney. The prevocational Assistants in Nursing training course has been run four times, and 44 women who have completed Assistants in Nursing Certificates II and III (a 96 per cent success rate), are now either in traineeships or in casual positions in the aged care industry. A further course is currently underway with 16 participants.

## Better conditions

### OUTWORKERS

Exploitation of home-based workers in the clothing industry is a serious industrial and social problem in Australia, and around the world. Many fashion garments and other clothes sold to unknowing consumers for substantial sums of money continue to be made in undesirable conditions for wages below the poverty line. Vulnerable workers, mostly women from Chinese and Vietnamese backgrounds, are caught in the home-based clothing sector with serious consequences to their health and well-being, and to their families.

*Behind the Label* is a three-year, \$4 million campaign by the NSW government to address the problems facing outworkers by promoting greater awareness and cooperation between the industry, unions and the community. The 1998 Pay Equity

Inquiry called for Government to address the needs of exploited clothing outworkers. In February 1999, Premier Carr announced the Government's commitment to put an end to this exploitation. Following extensive consultation with clothing retailers, manufacturers and outworkers, as well as community organisations working to improve the situation of outworkers, the Strategy was announced by the Premier in July 2001. There are five key elements:

- ◆ Legislative provisions through the *Industrial Relations (Ethical Clothing Trades) Act 2000* to insert special provisions into the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* to clarify the status of clothing outworkers as employees, help in recovering unpaid remuneration from principal contractors and other suppliers in the clothing production chain, and to empower government industrial inspectors to inspect records required to be kept by any person or company with obligations under the Clothing Trades (State) Award. DIR is currently developing material to inform industry parties of the new legislative provisions.
- ◆ Establishment of an Ethical Clothing Trades Council, with representation from clothing retailers and manufacturers, the Textile Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia (TCFUA) and relevant community groups, to promote compliance with, and identify possible enhancements to, existing self-regulatory mechanisms such as the *Homeworkers' Code of Practice* and voluntary Deeds of Cooperation (similar to the *Target Code*); and to advise Government on levels of compliance and possible need for a mandatory code for the clothing industry.
- ◆ Recruitment of four new bilingual inspector/advisers to the Behind the Label Unit to work within the Vietnamese, Chinese

and other communities providing practical assistance and information to clothing industry employers and employees to encourage compliance with industrial obligations and enforce any breaches of the law. A clothing outworker entitlements task force, including DIR and WorkCover inspectors and authorised industrial officers of the TCFUA and the New South Wales Labor Council, was established and commenced inspections on 6 August 2001. Some 140 inspections have been completed. The Taskforce is assessing the findings and planning further workplace inspections.

- ◆ A supply chain management improvement project to identify savings and efficiency improvements in the flow and management of work, and to demonstrate the benefits that can be achieved to the broader clothing industry. Funding from WorkCover's Grants Program supports an initial project being undertaken by the Australian Expert Group in Industry Studies (AEGIS) at the University of Western Sydney. The project will identify and begin implementing value added steps in a clothing supply chain, resulting in savings and efficiency improvements in the flow and management of the production work, whilst accommodating minimum labour standards, including occupational health and safety and workers compensation for outworkers. Funds are available under the *Clothing Outwork Strategy* for a further demonstration project based on the best practice model developed in this initial project.
- ◆ Labour adjustment through establishment of education and retraining programs for outworkers to deliver recognition of prior skills, upskilling and reskilling of outworkers, and to provide a skilled and flexible workforce for the clothing industry and realistic alternatives for outworkers who wish

to leave the industry. DIR is working closely with the Department of Education and Training (DET) to ensure that training programs are appropriately targeted to outworkers, building on the DET project to design a Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) Industry Training Strategy, detailed in the Measuring Up Report.

Community based programs to support and assist outworkers to access and participate in training and other opportunities are being developed. Strategy funding is also available for projects to increase understanding of the situation of clothing outworkers and opportunities opened up by participation in training, to identify outworker training priorities, match needs with available training, and to encourage and support outworkers to participate in training. \$1.3 million of the \$4 million allocated for the three year Strategy has been spent in the first year.

Over the three years of the Strategy the NSW Government seeks to:

- ◆ improve clothing industry compliance with industrial and occupational health and safety obligations, either through voluntary self regulation or a mandatory code, thus ensuring outworkers are aware of and receive their lawful entitlements and work in a safe environment;
- ◆ influence NSW consumers to support production of ethically made clothing;
- ◆ build a skilled labour force for the clothing industry through vocational training, and provide the industry with some practical tools to implement cost savings and efficiency improvements in its production chains;
- ◆ support development of a strong and viable clothing industry in NSW that is competitive in a global market, not an industry surviving through suppressed labour costs.

## Behind the label Strategy

**The Government's Behind the Label Strategy includes an education and retraining program for outworkers, which will also recognise their existing skills. This program provides a more skilled workforce for the clothing industry and alternatives for outworkers wishing to leave the industry.**

Money is also available for bi-lingual assistance, and to ensure the training is properly timed, held at accessible venues with child care, transport and payment of a subsidy for lost production.

Clothing outworker Anh Tran is a recent graduate from TAFE NSW-Sydney Institute. Under the Behind the Label strategy she has been able to convert her already formidable skills into nationally recognised qualifications. From a recent interview:

***Q. You recently graduated from the TAFE NSW course to assist outworkers in the clothing industry and have come away with level 3 skills qualifications. How will this help you in the future?***

You know, honestly, I 'm already thinking about stopping work from home as an outworker. I can't say how happy I have been because you know from the day I graduated I've done further study at TAFE....a computer course.

My husband and son were particularly proud of what I said at my

graduation and my husband has already bought a new computer for me to study with at home.

***Q. So do you feel more secure after the launch of the new Code of Practice today?***

Yes, definitely I am very, very confident because when the agreement is signed it means the people will have to comply with the law and meet their obligations.

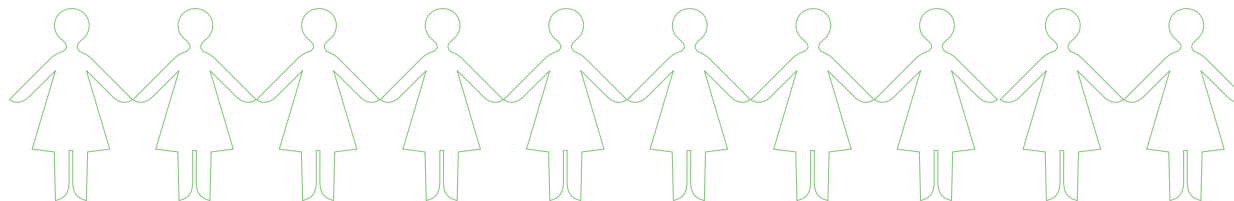
Emotionally I feel very, very happy and I want you to know that this event between the Textile Clothing and Footwear Union and the Australian Retailers Association should be publicised widely for outworkers so they can share my happiness.

***Q. I understand you have also been writing about the plight of outworkers. What sort of things have you been saying?***

You know actually the story I have written is about my life and I want to share it with everybody. It's about the happiness and the times of sadness that I experienced during the time I was an outworker.

I also want to encourage other outworkers to speak up and to write about their story because an outworkers life is very isolated. There is nobody to talk to or share their happiness and sadness.

Source: recent Labourline Interview



More information on the Strategy is available in DIR Annual Report 2000/2001 section 3 – <http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au/about/annual/ar01/index.html> and on the Behind the Label website – <http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au/behindthelabel/>. Information about related community information campaigns can be found at [www.awatw.org.au/fairwear](http://www.awatw.org.au/fairwear) .

### JOBSEEKERS

Women have experienced discrimination in dealing with employment agents, and migrant women in particular are less likely to be aware of unfair treatment or charges, their right to complain and the complaints process. In 2000, the Department for Women participated on the Steering Committee of the National Competition Policy Review of the *NSW Employment Agents Act 1996* to ensure that women's experiences of employment agents were taken into consideration. DFW liaised with women's and human rights organisations to provide information to the Review identifying problems experienced by women, particularly recently arrived migrant women, in dealing with unscrupulous employment agents. The Review supported enhanced enforcement to ensure compliance amongst employment agents, recommending repeal of the *Employment Agents Act 1996*, and continued protection for clients of employment agents through inclusion of relevant provisions (including the banning of charges to job-seekers) in the *Fair Trading Act*. An information standard for employment placement services is to be included in the *Fair Trading Act Regulations*, with a system of penalties for agents breaching the law.

## Occupational health and safety

### NAIL TECHNICIANS.

The Nail Technician industry is a female-dominated small business sector with limited educational requirements, regulation and business registration, with little knowledge about occupational health and safety. In 2001, the Department for Women, WorkCover, NSW Health and the Australian Professional Fingernail Association produced the Nail Technicians' Kit, containing information and advice about occupational health and safety, particularly about use and application of chemicals in the industry. The Kit was launched at the International Beauty Expo in November 2000, and included as a supplement in *Australian Beauty Therapist Magazine*. Almost all of the 1000 copies produced were distributed. Because of the Kit's success, a revised and updated version, addressing recent changes to legislation and industry practice, is being produced in 2002. WorkCover will also undertake a special project to increase Nail Technicians' understanding of industry regulations and occupational health and safety.

### MARKET GARDENERS

Much of the produce available in greengrocers' shops in Sydney is produced on small farms in the Sydney Basin by families of South-East Asian or Mediterranean background. Work in these market gardens is mostly done by the women of the families, in addition to their domestic duties. They are isolated with limited access to the outside world as most do not drive, and have a very small social network. Most do not have good English language skills, and cannot easily access relevant occupational health and safety information occupational health and safety information.

Following a pilot program for pesticide training (SMARTtrain AQF3) conducted during June/July 2001, NSW Agriculture, in collaboration with other government and community organisations, held an Information Day at Kemps Creek for Chinese women market gardeners. Information was provided on safe use of pesticides, health and community services and relevant training opportunities, certificates presented to SMARTtrain program graduates and training and community needs assessed. The University of Western Sydney was given \$85,000 under the 2001 Women's Grants Program for a project in partnership with other service providers to address the occupational health and safety training needs of women from Chinese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Italian and Maltese market gardening communities. The first of the four workshops was held in March 2002 and delivered basic occupational health and safety information, including safe pesticide use, basic first aid and women's health screening information to ten families of Cambodian background. Flexible delivery strategies were used to reach isolated women who cannot leave the farms as well as those who can attend workshops. The project should also increase agencies' knowledge of the needs of this group of women, and develop their links with local service providers.

### SEX WORKERS

The sex industry has traditionally had very poor occupational health and safety compliance. Research undertaken by the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), a NSW Health funded community-based organisation supporting female, male and transgender sex workers, and by Scarlet Alliance (the national peak body of the Australian Sex Industry) shows limited

resources and low levels of understanding of occupational health and safety issues in the sex industry to be a major deterrent to the establishment of health and safety standards in the industry. SWOP received \$164,390 from the WorkCover NSW Injury Prevention, Education and Research Grants Scheme for a project to build capacity for effective occupational health and safety systems in the sex industry, minimising the spread of sexually transmittable diseases and HIV, and to improve occupational health and safety practice in the industry generally. WorkCover has revised and updated the 1997 *Health and Safety Guidelines for Brothels*, developed in cooperation with NSW Health after introduction of *The Disorderly Houses Amendment Act 1995* enabled brothels to operate legally within certain parameters and requirements. Resources developed include a training module on occupational health and safety for sex workers and employers, a guidebook and 15-minute video on implementing occupational health and safety management systems in the sex industry and copies of the revised *Health and Safety Guidelines for Brothels*, in Chinese, Thai and Korean as well as English.

The General Manager of WorkCover launched the Guidelines and other resources in January 2002, and training workshops were conducted at 37 metropolitan and rural venues. The Guidelines are available through the WorkCover website, <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/> and through NSW Health and SWOP, and the video is available from SWOP. The initiatives have stimulated much interest within and beyond the industry, and have already attracted the attention of a British-based TV production house, which has been granted permission to use a scene from the video.

### CONTRACT CLEANING

Working conditions for workers in the cleaning industry (predominantly women of non-English speaking background) are characterised by low compliance, lack of knowledge of occupational health and safety responsibilities and absence of occupational health and safety systems. WorkCover is working with the contract cleaning industry to develop occupational health and safety guidance material for key people in the industry, such as property owners and managers, cleaning employers and contractors. Up to \$10,000 has been allocated to publish and distribute the guidance material. A working party with representation from both the property management and contract cleaning industries has been established, and draft guidance material has been developed to be published and launched by March 2003. Further information about this material will be available through the WorkCover website <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/>

### FACILITATING WOMEN'S EQUAL ACCESS TO RESOURCES, EMPLOYMENT, MARKETS AND TRADE

Women in isolated rural and regional areas trying to return to work after long periods at home undertaking family responsibilities often underestimate their existing skills and have difficulties getting information about further training and possible work and small business opportunities. The Department for Women developed a short workshop on *Economic Opportunities for Women* for rural women returning to the workforce during the first Women on Wheels Tour in 2001. The workshop covered issues such as recognising and recording existing skills, looking for jobs including telework, access to further education and training or retraining, and

developing employment and small business opportunities, and included a takeaway participant workbook to help women identify existing skills. It was designed and run to maximise input from successful local businesswomen and local service providers such as TAFE colleges, Community Technology and Internet Centres and Business Enterprise Centres. The workshop was successfully conducted in Coonamble in 2001 (with approximately 45 participants) and in Coonabarabran in 2002 (with approximately 40 participants) and formed the basis for a useful discussion amongst employment/business service providers in Armidale in 2002. The workbook has been utilised by participants and some organisations to assist women to recognise existing skills.

Women operate around one third of small businesses in New South Wales. Recent ABS data indicates women's business increased by 20,000 between November 1999 and June 2001. Women are an important force in the small business community and will continue to consider small business as a serious career choice and a pathway to financial independence.

The Department for Women has completed detailed statistical and literature-based research on the profile of women in small business in NSW and key issues for women in small business to provide accurate and current information and promote more informed policy development on this issue by relevant government and non-government organisations. This research has already been used for presentations to women in business gatherings in the North Coast and Northwest regions during the 2002 Women on Wheels (WOW) tour, and will be available on DFW's website [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au). The Department also organised a Round Table discussion of around

40 service providers and other stakeholders in late August 2002 to discuss the research findings and their implications for the programs and activities available for women in small business.

Australia-wide statistics suggest that only 30 per cent of small businesses predominately owned by women employ people in their business. This could suggest capacity for further growth in businesses run by women. The Department of State and Regional Development's research suggests that the barriers to growth for women's start-up businesses include skill levels and a lack of access to mentors. Women may have less skills in finance, marketing and management than men, and it appears that their business development needs may differ from men's, and that they may follow different business growth cycles.<sup>16</sup> Networking is a key strategy for any businessperson looking to grow their enterprise, but businesses run by women represent just 10 per cent of membership of business associations.

The Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD)'s Women in Business Mentor Program improves women's business skills and confidence, fostering networking and promoting business growth, enhancing the success of growth-oriented firms by providing assistance in the formative stage of the business. Early intervention is regarded as essential to help newer business owners to identify viable growth paths. The Program helps emerging women business owners with around one or two years' experience to build their business by linking them with experienced businesspeople with at least five years experience. The Program uses a combination of mentoring and practical business training sessions, providing a total of 50 hours contact over a six month period, including 20 hours of business skills workshops (on managing and leading a

business, business planning, marketing and financial management), 10 hours of business roundtables (on topics based on participant preferences) and 20 hours of one-on-one mentoring. More information and application forms for the Women in Business Mentor Program are available through <http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au>.

The Workplace Advice Unit of the Department of Industrial Relations is contributing to the Program by running information sessions informing women of their obligations under industrial law. Nine Programs were run in 2000/2001 at a cost of \$120,000; five in Sydney and four in regional areas (Newcastle, Coffs Harbour, and two at Port Macquarie) with a total of 300 participants, 150 of them emerging business owners. In 2001/2002, a further nine programs were run, five in Sydney and four in regional NSW (Tamworth, Albury, Coffs Harbour and Armidale) with over 280 participants.

More women are entering small business in rural and regional NSW, where they tend to face greater isolation than their metropolitan counterparts, but formal mentor programs offered in smaller regional areas have attracted fewer participants. DSRD piloted a program tailored specifically for regional/rural businesswomen, combining an introductory event, three business workshops and a closing event, and included online networking opportunities, in the Griffith/Riverina region in over a seven-month period in 2000. The flexible program let participants choose to attend all sessions or select those best suited to their needs. Fees were kept to an accessible level of \$40 per participant per workshop. Altogether, 50 businesswomen participated in the program, each attending around three of the sessions provided. A website for businesswomen

## What the participants said about the Women in Business Mentor Program...

**The Women in Business Mentor Program has been very successful in providing commercial success and professional outcomes for both mentors and mentorees.**

At the end of the six month program in 2000/2001:

- ◆ 94 per cent of mentorees indicated they had increased their business skills,
- ◆ 47 per cent increased their annual turnover
- ◆ 24 per cent increased the number of employees in their business
- ◆ 85 per cent also established better business networks as a direct result of the program.

In 2001/2002, feedback indicates that:

- ◆ 100 per cent of mentorees increased their business skills,
- ◆ 50 per cent increased their annual turnover and
- ◆ 25 per cent increased the number of employees in their business.

Some previous mentorees have even moved on to become mentors. On the Sydney Mentor Program that started in June 2002, three of the mentors are previous mentorees who have achieved significant business success since their initial participation in the program.

Source: Unpublished data from the Department of State and Regional Development, July 2002

in the Riverina region was established, incorporating an email group and chat-room facilities accessible for information or networking purposes on an ongoing basis. Three new businesswomen's networks were established in the region as a result of the program, and existing networks strengthened.

Overall, the pilot resulted in community recognition of the contributions made by businesswomen in the Riverina region and in increased awareness of networks for women in business. Feedback from the pilot program favoured flexible delivery models of business development support, with mentoring on a small group rather than one-on-one basis, and development of regional-based businesswomen networks for ongoing support.

Building on the experience and success of the pilot program, DSRD introduced the *Regional Women in Business Program*, combining business skills training workshops, networking events and smaller group mentoring sessions. In 2002, \$40,000 was allocated for two Regional Women in Business Programs based on this format to be run by contracted local service providers, one in the Lismore/Ballina region between May and July, and another in the South Coast/Bateman's Bay region from August 2002. Fifty businesswomen (38 participants with 12 mentors) participated in the Lismore program, with similar numbers anticipated in the South Coast/Bateman's Bay program. Information on the Women in Business Regional Program is available on <http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au>.

The RIRDC NSW Rural Women's Award is funded by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation and coordinated by NSW Agriculture's Rural Women's Network. The Award is designed to recognise and, more importantly, encourage the vital contribution women make to agriculture

### What participants in the Griffith Women in Business Regional Program said...

- ◆ 27 per cent employed more staff
- ◆ 57 per cent increased their turnover by the end of the program
- ◆ 80 per cent of participants reported an improvement in their overall business skills
- ◆ 57 per cent felt that they were better skilled at using the internet for business purposes and marketing after participating in the program.
- ◆ 70 per cent of participants joined business networks during the pilot
- ◆ 77 per cent felt that as a result of participating in the pilot, they improved their networking skills.

Outcomes also included the establishment of three new businesswomen's networks in the region and a strengthening of existing networks.

Unpublished data from the Department of State and Regional Development, July 2002.

and resource management. It aims to celebrate and acknowledge women's contributions to the industry by increasing their opportunities to participate through financially supporting and resourcing their skills, learning or project ideas. A \$20,000 bursary is awarded to the winner and leadership training provided to the three finalists. Funding has been committed for the Award until 2004. Information about the Award is available on the Rural Women's network website <http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au/rwn>.

Growing interest in the Award is indicated by an increase in applications from 11 in 2001 to 16 in 2002. In 2001 the winner was Jon-Maree Baker, a cotton consultant and farmer from Narrabri, and the 2002 Award was won by Robbie Sefton, a public relations and communications consultant from Coonabarabran.

### PROVIDING BUSINESS SERVICES, TRAINING AND ACCESS TO MARKETS, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY, PARTICULARLY TO LOW-INCOME WOMEN

Home-Based Businesses (HBBs) are a significant source of economic development and employment generation for NSW. Department of State and Regional Development research suggests that around one in ten of all Australian households host a HBB. In NSW, 67 per cent of small businesses, or around two out of three, are based at home or operate from a home address, and over 30 per cent of HBBs are run by women.

The Department of State and Regional Development's Home-Based Business Program provides tailored business development support services and information resources to help HBB owner/operators build their business networks, enhance business and management skills, develop growth strategies and gain improved access to business information. It also recognises specific challenges facing women operators in managing and growing their business, including managing business and family responsibilities and operating in isolation with little direct contact with other people.

The Program was piloted in Penrith Valley in partnership with Penrith City Council between March and September 2001. It included an introductory session, six workshops on various

business themes (for example, marketing, cash-flow management, e-commerce, building strategic alliances) and follow-up online chat sessions with experts. In total, 23 local HBBs participated in the program, 13 of them women. This successful 2001 pilot provided a model for the development of further initiatives for HBBs in NSW.

In March 2002, a three-month program for HBBs in the Lower Hunter region was commenced to increase skill levels and foster networking and growth-strategy development. The Lower Hunter HBB Program provided practical business workshops and smaller cluster group sessions on business themes, IT training and online chat sessions. Of 27 local HBBs are participating in the program, 14 are women. A program run for Sydney-based HBBs in the creative media sector in early 2002 included four *Equipped for Business* seminars in April and May 2002. Sessions were developed in partnership with industry associations and each seminar attracted up to 110 participants.

The extensive online HomeBiz Kit launched by the Department in early 2001 addresses all stages of the business life cycle including planning, starting up, managing and growing a business. The Kit can be accessed from the NSW Small Business Website at [www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au](http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au).

The Department of State and Regional Development Business Advisory Service Program provides information and advice to people who wish to start a business or who own or manage an existing small business through Small Business Advisory Service Centres in 50 locations throughout regional and metropolitan NSW. Services include business guidance, information and referral, training in business topics and self-help diagnostic and business tools such as fact sheets and software. In 2000/2001,

### What participants said about the Home-based Business program...

A survey of participants in the Penrith Program indicated that:

- ◆ 92 per cent enhanced their business skills
- ◆ 83 per cent increased their business growth potential.

Participants in the creative media Home-based Business series were also very positive:

- ◆ 86 per cent of participants who attended the seminars had their expectations met
- ◆ 92 per cent of participants learnt new concepts
- ◆ 91 per cent thought that they would implement in their business what they learnt.

Unpublished data from the Department of State and Regional Development, July 2002.

58,250 (47 per cent) of the Service's clients were women; in the first three quarters of 2001/2002, there were 55,587 women clients (47 per cent of total clients), giving an estimated total for the year of 74,116, an increase of 15,866. The Service provides invaluable information to microbusiness about establishing and operating a profitable enterprise, and creates thousands of small business opportunities including developing exports, replacing imports and promoting local employment initiatives.

Since November 2001, DSRD has provided an Indigenous Business Advisory Service with free business guidance and access to trained business facilitators for Aboriginal people seeking to start a business, or who already own or manage a

business. The Service is delivered by the Parkes/Forbes Business Enterprise Centre (covering the Binaal Billa and Murdi Paaki ATSIC regions in Western NSW), and by three 'mobile' business development managers employed by the Department, in Sydney, Northern (Ballina) and Southern NSW (Goulburn). More information about the Service is available through [www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au](http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au).

### Indigenous Business Advisory Service

In the first quarter of 2002, 46 per cent of all enquiries to the Indigenous Business Advisory Service were from Aboriginal women, and assistance was given to 52 women business operators.

Unpublished data from the Department of State and Regional Development, July 2002.

Many women enter business and industry through co-managing the family business, usually after several years out of the workforce, and for most the transition to work is a challenge. Over a five-week period in October and November 2002, the Office of Western Sydney and the Department for Women will offer free four hour Business Workshops for Women in Industry to encourage and support women's participation in the economic development of Western Sydney, beginning in the Macarthur region and moving on to other areas of Western Sydney. The workshops will offer participants an opportunity to develop skills in Information Technology, Marketing, Human Resources and Networking.

### STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC CAPACITY AND COMMERCIAL NETWORKS

There is considerable potential for growth in small businesses run by women in NSW. To explore this capacity, the Department of State and Regional Development introduced free Women in Business Growth Strategy Workshops in 1999 to help develop business skills and growth strategies. In 2000/01, 13 workshops were delivered in Sydney and three in regional areas at Orange, Coffs Harbour and Gosford, in all attended by 666 women. Topics included exporting, marketing, intellectual property, cash-flow management, selling, networking, business systems, Internet as a business tool, e-commerce and customer skills.

In 2001/02, \$30,000 was allocated for expanded workshops covering technology options, capitalisation planning, building business relationships, legal issues, marketing, risk management, financial management, sales systems, self promotion, strategic alliances and exporting. Seven were delivered in Sydney and nine in regional NSW at Wollongong, Dubbo, Kogarah, Armidale, Kurri Kurri, Newcastle, Coffs Harbour, Mudgee and Lithgow. In total, there were 514 participants. The workshops address relevant business themes to help women enhance their business management skills and knowledge levels in key areas, and to develop growth strategies in their businesses, as well as providing an opportunity for women running their own businesses to network. More than 85 per cent of participants so far indicate that they expect to implement in their business what they learnt at the sessions.

## INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Consultations with Aboriginal women in Sydney and Taree highlighted the issues of indigenous women in Kempsey, where there are few employment opportunities and minimal access to services. The Department for Women began working with the local community in Kempsey in 1998 to increase local Aboriginal women's capacity to contribute to sustainable economic, social and cultural development of the region. In 1999 the \$80,000 Kempsey Community Economic Renewal Project (KCERP) partnership project with the local community placed an Aboriginal Project Officer in Kempsey and raised community awareness of issues affecting Aboriginal women and increased their input into development of the region.

The Kempsey women identified culturally appropriate training to give them the skills and confidence to manage their own enterprises. Guri Wa Ngundagar Aboriginal Corporation (GWNAC) received \$20,000 through the Women's Grants to work with Aboriginal community organisations and Aboriginal women to develop and pilot appropriate training, and to set up a mentoring program, women's network and other necessary support structures. An indigenous grants project officer located in DFW will work with GWNAC, local Aboriginal organisations and the Kempsey women to build on the training and earlier work.

Discussion sessions held in Kempsey and in smaller rural communities and questionnaires tapped into priority issues of the valley and identified a huge scope for the delivery of programs to empower local women. The steering committee established to oversee the project identified two distinct groups of Aboriginal women who would benefit from culturally appropriate training:

- ◆ Women already in leadership positions (including the Steering Committee themselves) requiring training to be mentors and trainers, and to have their prior learning recognised.
- ◆ Women not in community leadership activities or in the workforce and facing significant barriers to participation in both.

The Department for Women is working with Emerge Australia in Redfern on a \$100,000 project using Micro Enterprise Development (MED) principles to increase economic development opportunities for women. The Redfern Micro Enterprise Partnership Project, a pilot of the MED approach to determine its applicability in Australian indigenous communities, is working to increase indigenous women's self-sufficiency by building their personal capacity to manage and develop an enterprise idea. The project encourages community collaboration and works to build the social capital of the Redfern community through integrating economic and cultural objectives.

Emerge is working with about ten women from Redfern and surrounding areas, providing initial training with a focus on empowerment, identifying enterprise possibilities, development of business plans, and skills in implementing and managing their enterprise idea. Participants will receive micro loans to finance the initial stages of operation, and have access to training and mentoring, and help in building their ability to access and manage credit. Participants complete a program of small business training, building skills in the area of their enterprise, and gaining necessary skills for self-sufficiency and self-employment, while regularly repaying business loans and identifying resources needed for expansion. A group of five women is working on enterprise ideas, participating in motivation and leadership discussions and learning budgeting and record-keeping skills. Two other Aboriginal women are

being helped on an individual basis with their business ideas, including connections to business buddies, and possible financial assistance. A library has been established and resource packs of information on issues such as starting a business and GST are being produced as part of the training package. The project is providing valuable information on applicability of the MED model in an urban indigenous community. Initial indications are that such projects work best in the Australian context through adopting a brokerage role, supporting and linking women to existing services and resources for assistance with their business ideas and training needs.

#### ELIMINATING OCCUPATION SEGREGATION AND ALL FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (ADB) intervenes in cases before the NSW Industrial Relations Commission to address systemic discrimination in industrial instruments and awards, as empowered by the *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*. It has provided input to the Review of the *NSW Industrial Relations Act 1996*, development and implementation of the Government's *Pay Equity Strategy*. The ADB has made interventions and submissions on a range of matters (including the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations case). The ADB continues to produce publications for employers on anti-discrimination and EEO issues including work/life balance, helping employers to implement best practice in anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity, and to promote full participation of employees with family responsibilities in the workplace. ADB publications include:

- ◆ Guidelines on carers' responsibilities provisions in the Anti-Discrimination Act.
- ◆ Anti-discrimination guidelines for hoteliers, local government

councillors, managers of local councils, small business owners, union delegates

- ◆ Discrimination and Harassment: the rights and responsibilities of employees, a training kit for vocational teachers,
- ◆ Know your Rights posters
- ◆ Guidelines on identifying and eliminating discrimination in NSW industrial instruments, prepared by the ADB and the Department of Industrial Relations.

Details of publications and order forms are available on the ADB's website <http://www.agd.nsw.gov.au/adb>.

#### Pay Equity

Average weekly ordinary time earnings of women full-time workers in NSW are approximately 82.4 per cent of those of full-time male workers.<sup>17</sup> When part-time and casual workers are included, the average weekly earnings of all women in the NSW workforce are approximately 65.6 per cent of those of all male workers.<sup>18</sup> The NSW Pay Equity Inquiry implemented the Government's election commitment to investigate the causes of gender pay disparity and develop strategies to correct any imbalances arising from discriminatory practices.

The Pay Equity Inquiry recommended establishment of a new Equal Remuneration Principle in NSW to provide guidance to the Commission and industrial parties in addressing and rectifying the complex factors leading to undervaluation of women's work within NSW awards. The Industrial Commission conducted hearings and submissions from industrial parties including the Crown group of agencies (the Department of Industrial Relations, the Department for Women, the Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, the

Anti-Discrimination Board, the Department of Education and Training, NSW Health, NSW Treasury and the Public Sector Management Office). In June 2000, the Commission established the new *Equal Remuneration and Other Conditions Principle*, allowing comparison of the value of work across occupations using the Commission's work value criteria in a gender-inclusive way.

### THE LIBRARIANS' CASE

The first decision handed down by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission under the newly created *Equal Remuneration and Other Conditions Principle* was in response to an application by the NSW Public Service Association on behalf of public sector library and archives workers, of whom around 70 per cent are women. The State Library and Premier's Department, in responding to the application, acknowledged undervaluation of the work and prepared a revised award model based on an objective assessment of the work value of librarians, archivists and library technicians. The State Library allocated about \$72,000 to researching and developing the alternate award and classification model, and gave evidence on the value of work performed by librarians, archivists and library technicians in the NSW public service.

The Full Bench decision handed down on 28 March 2002 found work in this sector to have been undervalued historically on a gender basis, and that in addition significant increases in skills, work and responsibility over the last decade had not been properly taken into account in fixing pay rates, and awarded pay increases from March 2002 averaging 16.01 per cent overall. Librarians' rates increased by 15.28 per cent, library technicians' rates by 16.72 per cent, and junior rates of pay

were abolished. A single award was made covering library and archives workers across the NSW public sector including TAFE, with classification descriptors containing not only qualification requirements but providing for recognition of experience or equivalent qualifications. The decision also confirmed beyond doubt the status of librarianship as a profession equivalent to other more male dominated professions.

A further application under the Principle on behalf of community services and development workers in local government was lodged in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission by the Municipal Employees Union in mid 2002.

### Pregnancy discrimination

WorkCover has allocated \$45,000 for the design, publication and launch in 2002/2003 of the *Pregnancy and Work: a Guide*, developed in consultation with the Department of Industrial Relations, the Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) and the Department for Women, the NSW Labor Council and Australian Business Limited. The Guide provides practical advice for employers and contractors to help them develop safe systems of work for pregnant women and provide a workplace free from discrimination, protecting the health, safety and welfare of pregnant or breastfeeding working women, or women who may become pregnant. It integrates requirements of relevant industrial relations, anti-discrimination and occupational health and safety legislation. It provides a systematic approach to ensuring that work and workplaces are safe, fair and consistent with the entitlements of pregnant women and new mothers to continue in paid work. Information is provided on relevant work hazards to pregnant and breastfeeding women, and the risk assessment approach

outlined will help employers decide about eliminating or reducing risks arising from these hazards.

The *Guide* will help employers in all industries to meet the legal requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* to ensure the welfare (including both physiological and psychological welfare) of their employees. It will clarify misunderstandings and confusion about correct procedures, reduce likelihood of harm and employer's liability for harm, and help to provide a more harmonious and productive work environment in which employees obtain their entitlements.

## Access to non-traditional occupations

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The public sector (like the private sector) has an IT skills shortage in some occupations, and low representation (20 per cent) of women in IT jobs. Public sector agencies (including the Department of Information Technology Management, the Department of Education and Training, the Public Sector Management Office, the Department for Women and the Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment) are working on a project identifying ways of combining equity goals, human resource planning to meet current and future IT skill shortages and agency business planning in a cost effective way to attract, train and place more women in IT jobs within their current agency through short term training courses.

Action research pilots of *Re-skilling women for IT* conducted in the Department of Fair Trading and the Attorney General's Department are identifying IT skill gaps within the organisation, considering human resources processes for predicting and meeting IT skills gaps, selecting women for bridging training

and placing them in IT roles with support. The project model should be transferable to other public sector agencies to help them address IT skill gaps as well as women's low participation rate in IT employment.

The Department for Women (DFW) and the Premier's Council for Women (PCW) provided \$10,000 to sponsor the Western Sydney Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Cluster Women in ICT Award 2002. The Western Sydney IT Startup Award for Women, *IT Woman of the Future*, is one of a series of knowledge-region initiatives designed by the Office of Western Sydney and the Western Sydney IT Cluster to accelerate growth of high-tech knowledge-intensive industries in Western Sydney. It is modelled on 'best business plan' competitions operating in Europe, Canada and the United States and is supported by the Western Sydney IT Steering Committee, including the IT industry associations and the NSW Department of Information Technology and Management. The Award aims to attract more women to the IT industry and, more generally, to build IT sector employment to enhance in the economic development of Western Sydney. It is made to a woman entrepreneur in Western Sydney to start up a new IT business venture, and encourages commercialisation of promising new ideas and technologies and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship. The inaugural *IT Woman of the Future* Award of \$10,000 was presented to Kim Aubrey in August 2002.

### PUBLIC SECTOR UNIFORMED SERVICES

#### Police service

NSW Police Service is working to increase the proportion of women police recruits state-wide to 50 per cent at each intake, in line with the Wood Royal Commission reform processes and

other government commitments to build a greater diversity within the police service. Information on recruitment to the Police Service is available on <http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/recruitment/Recruitment.cfm>.

**The January 2002 intake was the largest group so far in the NSW Police recruit education program, the Diploma of Policing Practice (DPP).**

Of that intake, women made up:

- ◆ 49 per cent of the Graduate class,
- ◆ 32 per cent of the distance education class,
- ◆ 30 per cent of the undergraduate class.

Source: Unpublished data from NSW Police Service July 2002.

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In the financial year 2000–2001, 168 women were at the rank of Sergeant or above.

In the period from July 2001 to May 2002, there were 184 women at the rank of Sergeant or above, an increase of 9.5 per cent.

Source: Unpublished data from NSW Police Service July 2002.

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Between 2000 and 2001 there was:

- ◆ a 5 per cent increase in the number of women applying to be fire-fighters, and
- ◆ a 50 per cent increase in the number of women successfully completing the physical aptitude test.

Source: Unpublished data from NSW Fire Brigades, July 2002.

The Police Service also runs *Improving Promotional Opportunities for Women Police Officers*, an ongoing service initiative to improve opportunities for women police officers, particularly those at lower levels, increasing participation at managerial levels by providing positive role models for women in policing.

### Fire-fighters

NSW Fire Brigades are committed to increasing representation of women in the permanent and retained fire-fighting service, and undertake specific activities to attract women to fire-fighting. \$5,000 was allocated for production of a poster depicting women fire-fighters performing varied functions within their roles, which was distributed to women's organisations, sporting organisations and other contacts supplied by the Department for Women. The agency attends the International Women's Day function in Hyde Park each year to circulate material relating to women in fire-fighting, and also registers positions available on the Women's Gateway under non-traditional employment opportunities for women. Information is also put on the Fire Brigades' website <http://www.nswfb.nsw.gov.au/index.asp?globalid=5> on the Physical Aptitude Test for Fire-fighters. A Physical Aptitude Test Familiarisation Session was held in 2001, to allow candidates to handle the equipment to be used in the test and to seek guidance from departmental staff on the method of approach and training requirements. It was specifically introduced to help women understand the requirements and complete the test successfully. Slightly more women candidates were successful in the 2001 recruitment campaign. The Physical Aptitude Test is being reviewed on an ongoing basis. Strategies being explored to attract larger numbers of women in the first instance include production of a low-cost training video for applicants.

In 2002, the Fire Brigades are seeking funding from the Federal Department for Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business for an ongoing state-wide program to recruit ten Aboriginal fire-fighters (five women and five men) each year to positions available initially in the Sydney Metropolitan Area. This program will be based on a pilot indigenous recruitment program run in 2001, and will include specialised TAFE training to prepare candidates for the selection process and some contribution to training costs as permanent fire-fighters. To build recruitment of rural women, particularly indigenous women, the Fire Brigades participated in the Department for Women's 2002 Women on Wheels tour for the full two-week period, visiting towns in the mid-North Coast, Northern Rivers, Northern Tablelands and North West Slopes and Plains regions of NSW. The NSW Fire Brigades delivered information at 23 public forums in 15 towns through talks and information packages. Recruitment information for the NSW Fire Brigades is available on the website, <http://www.nswfb.nsw.gov.au/index.asp?globalid=5>.

### Corrective services

The Department of Corrective Services is also recruiting more women to custodial officer positions, establishing a committee to coordinate strategies based on consultation with women employees, including setting up a Women's Forum at the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre to discuss issues arising from working in a predominantly male environment. Training is to be provided about departmental employment policies and procedures, and a Workforce Learning and Development Framework developed to identify and remove structural barriers to career progression for women and other EEO target groups.

In 2000/2001, 13 recruitment days were held in country and city locations, with attendance by women currently on staff to encourage other women to apply for jobs. Feedback from these days was used to develop departmental recruitment literature available to women considering a career with the department. Custodial recruitment packages now include information on rostering and shift arrangements, child care facilities, Inmate Development and Probation and Parole Services, as well as additional information on what qualifies as relevant experience. Strategies were developed to address staff child care needs, and a *Pregnant Employee Information Kit* (containing guidelines, risk assessment framework, a form for the development of an individual work plan and a check list) was developed and distributed throughout the department. The Kit aims to balance the rights of the pregnant employee with the department's duty of care responsibilities towards the employee and her unborn child.

The department's 2000/2001 recruitment campaign led to a considerable increase in enquiries and appointments. In 2000/2001, 89 women were appointed as correctional officers, more than twice the number from the previous year (42), and nearly three times the number of appointments (30) in 2001/2002.

## Construction industry

Women make up only 12 per cent of employees in the construction industry. They are

- ◆ 6.82 per cent of managers,
- ◆ 9.3 per cent of professionals,
- ◆ 10.33 per cent of paraprofessionals,
- ◆ 0.74 per cent of trades,
- ◆ 6.52 per cent of operators/drivers and
- ◆ 2.4 per cent of labourers.

Source: information from NSW Department of Public Works and Services, July 2002.

The Department of Public Works and Services (DPWS) works with the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to promote the construction industry as a career of choice for women in NSW and Australia. NAWIC, a non-profit organisation founded in the USA on 1953 and established in Australia in 1995, aims to promote and improve the construction industry by the advancement of women within it. DPWS provides \$8,500 to sponsor a category in NAWIC's annual awards highlighting achievements of women in the construction industry. In 2001 DPWS sponsored the *DPWS Award for Achievement in Design*. DPWS also sits on both the Board of the NSW Division of NAWIC and the Education Committee, which presents at University and TAFE Careers Days, oversees development and implementation of a mentoring program for women in the construction industry, and is currently developing a national website and piloting a networking program into secondary schools.

Participation of women and Aboriginal people in civil engineering is very low. The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) identifies two of its ten four year civil engineering scholarships at universities throughout NSW—one for an Aboriginal student and one for a woman student.

### PROMOTING HARMONISATION OF WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY FOR WOMEN AND MEN

The *NSW Government Work and Family Strategy* is designed to help NSW workers to combine work and family responsibilities. The Strategy, established in 1996 and revised and refocused in 2001, is led by the Department of Industrial Relations and has a Taskforce of nine participating government agencies (including the Department for Women) which implement and report on initiatives to help with work/family balance.

Because little quantitative data exists on how people successfully combine work and caring responsibilities, the Department for Women and the Department for Industrial Relations worked with the Australian Bureau of Statistics throughout 2000 to develop and test the survey on work and caring responsibilities. The publication, *Managing Caring Responsibilities and Paid Employment* (ABS No. 4903.1), released on 25 May 2001, contains valuable information to inform the Strategy and other NSW policy development on balancing work and caring responsibilities. *The NSW Work and Family Strategy 2001–2003: Making It Work* is available on DIR's website [www.dir.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au). Other relevant material on the website includes papers from the Review workshop conducted by DIR in 1999.

*Making It Work* reflects a new phase of government work focused on developing practical and affordable ways for

specific industries and organisations to combine work and family commitments, meeting needs of both employers and employees, and improving employer knowledge of and compliance with statutory obligations. It is an industry-based approach where consultation with stakeholders is integral, and includes a commitment to review the adequacy of existing entitlements for workers with family responsibilities. A key achievement under the Strategy is the publication *Time to Care: Good Family Friendly Ideas for Small Business*, produced by the Women's Equity Bureau of the Department of Industrial Relations and the State Chamber of Commerce (NSW), and launched in 2001. *Time to Care* provides answers to questions about implementing and managing family friendly arrangements and complying with all legal requirements in a practical, step-by-step format, easily accessible to small and medium sized businesses, which often lack the resources to gather this information on their own. It outlines the features of a family friendly work culture and provides advice on how to implement specific family friendly work practices such as part-time work, flexible working hours and working from home. It draws on 'real life' examples from small to medium sized businesses in metropolitan and regional locations in NSW, ranging from three to 84 employees.

The Department of Industrial Relations has also developed six training modules on work and family issues to be delivered through the Workplace Advice and Compliance Units as workshop training sessions for employers, particularly in small to medium sized businesses. Workshop participants will be provided with the skills and knowledge to explore, introduce and manage work and family issues effectively and within current industrial relations guidelines. The training modules cover:

- ◆ Benefits of providing a family friendly workplace

- ◆ Pregnancy and parental leave
- ◆ Return to work after parental leave
- ◆ Flexible work options: part-time, job sharing and working from home
- ◆ Carer's and family leave
- ◆ Legal requirements for family friendly work practices

### Residential aged care

Industries operating on a 24 hour 7 days a week basis are often seen as challenging environments in which to balance work and personal needs. The Department of Industrial Relations and the Department for Women have been working with employer and union groups in the residential aged care sector on a project to encourage good practice in rostering in residential aged care in NSW, by identifying ways in which improved rostering arrangements, sensitive to work and family needs, might help staff recruitment and retention and reduce casualisation in the sector. Directors of Nursing and Roster Managers at seven nursing homes in metropolitan and regional NSW were interviewed, and focus groups conducted with nursing and general staff. Preliminary analysis of the project findings has been completed and guidelines for effective rostering for work and family balance in the residential aged care sector are currently being developed and will be available by the end of 2002.

When completed, the project should:

- ◆ Help achieve balance between work and family in rostering practices, and a reduction in levels of occupational health and safety incidents and absenteeism;

- ◆ Help employers to meet relevant Aged Care Accreditation Standards;
- ◆ Improve retention and recruitment rates of employees in the residential health care sector;
- ◆ Identify employer and employee education needs in relation to industrial obligations and entitlements in the area of work and family.

In 2002, the Office of the Status of Women coordinated a one-day scoping seminar to identify and discuss possible future directions for work and family strategies in Australasia, in view of slow progress nationally on this issue. The seminar, hosted in Sydney by the NSW Department for Women, was attended by more than 80 participants including academic and other experts on work and family issues, officials from all States, the Commonwealth and New Zealand, and representatives of trade unions, relevant community groups and industry. It focused on infrastructure and supports, part-time and non-standard hours, work and family projects in action; and economic disadvantage/paid maternity leave. Overall directions from the seminar included adoption of a broader approach to work and family encompassing a 'lifecycle' approach to flexible work arrangements and acknowledging different social and cultural family types, encouragement for a universal paid maternity or parental leave system and an increased focus on the entitlements of lower-paid, unskilled or casual workers, including regulating for job security. Participants also recognised the need for research on the intersection of employment, social security, taxation and retirement funding systems, and the implications for work and family, in order to progress work and family policy Australia-wide.

## CARERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Following amendment of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* to include carers' responsibilities as a ground for workplace discrimination, the Anti-Discrimination Board is producing an *Issues Paper* focusing on developing a legal and policy framework to illustrate the changing nature of the workforce. In particular the increasing numbers of women in paid work, and debates about the responsibilities of government, the role of employers and the rights of workers are considered. The paper will examine the relationship between flexible and family-friendly work practices, industrial changes that have impacted on workers' abilities to manage work and other life responsibilities, patterns of debate in Australia and overseas and the main public policy issues for the future. Publication information will be available on the ADB's website <http://www.agd.nsw.gov.au/adb>.

The ADB also provides training for employers on the carers' responsibilities provisions. A comprehensive in-house trainers' guide to cases and materials on interpreting the carers' responsibilities provisions of the Act is currently being developed so that information given to employers and employees is informed by up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the legislation and related case law.

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- 3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999, *Child care*, Cat. No.4402.0.
- 4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Labour Force Selected Summary Tables Australia, August 2002*, Cat. No. 6291.0.40.001.
- 5 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1966, *Labour Force Australia August 1966*, Cat. No. 6203.0; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Labour Force Australia August 2002*, Cat. No. 6203.0.
- 6 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Labour Force Selected Summary Tables Australia, August 2002*, Cat. No. 6291.0.40.001.
- 7 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1982, *Transition from school to work, 1982*, Cat. No. 6227; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, *Transition from School to Work, 2001*, Cat. No. 6227.
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- 11 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997, *Part-time, Casual and Temporary Employment, NSW, October 1997*, Cat. No. 6247.1.
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- 14 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2000, *Employment arrangements – Superannuation, Australia*, Cat. No. 6361, unpublished data.
- 15 NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, unpublished data, 2002.
- 16 *Yellow Pages Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report 2001*.
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- 18 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, August 2002*, Cat. No. 6302.0.