

# Mallesons Stephen Jaques - Summary of Organisation Initiatives

NSW Quality Part-time Work Roundtable February 2009

Mallesons has been committed to supporting working flexible work for the past two decades. We appointed our first female partner in the 1980's and in the early 1990's paid parental leave and flexible work were first introduced.

In 2004 Mallesons launched its "**Making work work, together**" (MWWT) initiative. This program proved to be a watershed for the firm in shifting culture and enhancing staff attraction and retention. It was designed to support all our employees in managing the pressure and working hours typical of life in a large international commercial law firm.

In 2006, Mallesons Chief Executive Partner, Robert Milliner, identified EEO/Flexibility as one of his top five people priorities for the next three years. In the same year the firm created the new role of **EEO/Flexibility Manager** reporting to the Executive Director, People and Development. Significant resources and budget have been allocated to the firm's programs around EEO/flexibility.

## Tailored flexible work/part-time arrangements to support employee needs

The MWWT initiative includes formalised flexible working options. Staff are given the option to apply to work:

- (a) part-time hours
- (b) work flexible hours (such as compressed hours, finishing late or starting early)
- (c) job-share
- (d) telework from home or a combination of these options.

## Policies to support flexible/part-time work

The "**Making work work, together**" program also includes a range of other policies to support managing work and life commitments:

**Meeting Times Policy** - encourages meetings to be held between 9am and 5pm. Additionally, it is our policy to support employees if they need to attend an important family event during business hours, it also aims to **avoid running major firm events during school holidays**.

**Paid parental leave** - up to 12 weeks paid maternity leave and 12 months unpaid parental leave for mothers. Male employees entitled to 1 week of paid paternity leave.

**48/52 Swap pay for leave** - is a policy which enables all employees to sacrifice up to 4 weeks of salary to take additional leave. It is open to all employees.

**Time in lieu guidelines** were introduced in mid-2007 to recognise significant additional hours, promoting the importance of individual health and well being. Employees can receive up to 10 days per year of additional leave.

## Other benefits and resources to support flexible/part-time work

Our **Emergency Childcare program** - costs are covered by the firm and care is provided nationally by Dial an Angel or staff arranged care. Childcare is also provided on site at residential conferences and programs. This service is used by male and female partners and staff.

**Work/life links** - an independent national information and resource service for assistance on childcare, eldercare, community, government and private services.

**Childcare and eldercare kits** - on-line resources designed to provide practical information to help with access to child and elder care resources.

**A Flexible Working Toolkit** - available to all staff on managing flexible work work for individuals, teams and clients.

**The Jugglers' Network** - is a bi-monthly seminar series, established in 2004, for all employees, to assist with managing work and life. We have had presentations from experts in the areas including parenting toddlers, raising boys, emotional resilience, and nutrition for kids. It is now regularly attended by a cross section of male and female partners, lawyers and staff.

### Demonstrated outcomes of positive employee engagement from these initiatives

Measuring our initiatives is critical. In addition to its annual internal employee opinion survey (The Vibe), Mallesons has benchmarked the firm's initiatives against other organisations as an important way to measure progress. The Vibe has been run by the firm since 2004 and has an 89% participation rate among partners and staff. Feedback regarding our initiatives includes:

The Vibe Employee Opinion Survey	Results
Staff feeling proud to be associated with Mallesons	93%
Staff recommend it as a good place to work.	87%
My immediate partner/manager is accommodating of my life outside work (against Towers Perrin-ISR Global Professional Services Norm of 69%)	78% (up from 75% in 2004)
Partners in the firm support diversity in the workplace	70% (up from 67% in 2004)
My work schedule allows sufficient flexibility to meet my personal/family needs (against Towers Perrin-ISR Global Professional Services Norm of 59%)	70% (up from 64% in 2004)

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