



## 2006 EOWA AUSTRALIAN CENSUS OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

# Census Background Information

### Introduction

This is the fourth analysis of the progress of women in the corporate leadership of companies listed on the ASX200 index of the Australian Stock Exchange. The last Census was published in 2004, but has now moved to a biennial project.

New analyses in this year's census include figures representing the distribution of directorships (women and men) across ASX200 companies, and the representation of women on boards or in executive management in the ASX200, ordered by market capitalisation.

Published in the analysis is the *EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership ASX200 Blue Ribbon List*, which was first compiled in the 2004 Census and identifies the companies with the highest number of women in leadership positions. In addition, the 2006 Census includes for the first time the *Top Performing Companies List*, which features ASX200 companies with 25% or more women Board Directors and 25% or more women Executive Managers.

The Census project is based on the methodology developed by Catalyst, the leading US research and advisory organisation, and which was first applied in the US in 1993. Using the Catalyst methodology enables comparisons to be made with the EOWA Census and the findings from comparable studies conducted in other parts of the world: the United States, Canada and South Africa. Other comparable Censuses that are referenced in this year's publication but do not use the Catalyst methodology are the United Kingdom and New Zealand Censuses, and the European Commission report on *Women and Men in Decision Making*.

### Methodology

What differentiates this research on the status of women in leadership is that it employs a census rather than survey methodology. This census methodology, licensed from Catalyst, ensures that all members of the target population are counted, providing a precise picture of women's status and progress that is comparable from year to year.

Catalyst's methodology involves the information being initially obtained and summarised from publicly-available annual reports released during the 2005 calendar year. Companies are then contacted to validate the data. For this year's Census, data from 197 of the 200 companies (98.5%) were validated, the highest validation rate that has ever been achieved (in the 2004 Census, 95.4% of companies were validated). For the companies that did not validate their data, the information obtained from their annual reports is published unverified.



The analysis in this report is based on the companies listed on the ASX200 Index as at 1 February 2006. In this report, all 200 companies listed on the ASX200 on the census date are included in the analysis. This expands on the census methodology applied in all previous EOWA Census reports, which excluded property and investment trusts from the overall analysis (hence data from only 174 companies on the ASX200 were analysed in the 2004 Census).

However, comparability of the 2006 report with the 2002, 2003 and 2004 Census findings has been maintained, as all figures for previous years for the full population of ASX200 companies has been recalculated and are quoted throughout this year's publication. Furthermore, the summary data for the 2006 population 'excluding trusts' are also published as appendices in this year's publication for direct comparison with the data from past reports.

As has been acknowledged in previous US and Canadian Census reports, defining the Executive Management group in an organisation is challenging, and at times it is difficult to know if comparisons across companies are valid. In coding the titles of the Executive Managers, the Census used the system previously developed by Catalyst. In a small number of cases, titles could not be coded. The industry coding system used was that applied by the Australian Stock Exchange, the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS). Census data from across the world are comparable because each country collects data on what is considered the most relevant group of companies in that country:

- In the US, data are collected on companies ranked in the Fortune 500 (F500), which ranks the 500 publicly-listed corporations in the US with the highest revenue.
- In Canada, data are collected on companies ranked in the National Post's Financial Post 500 list (the 'FP500'). The FP500 comprises the largest Canadian companies and is widely recognised in Canada as the standard measure of corporate performance and market prominence.
- In South Africa, data are collected for 343 companies, comprising 17 of the largest State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and all 326 companies listed on the main board of the JSE Securities Exchange (JSE) (excluding Venture Capital and Alt-X companies, but including firms with all operations overseas or in other African countries, as well as suspended companies).



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*"To create an Australia where women in the workplace  
can achieve their greatest potential."*

The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) administers the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act* (1999). This piece of legislation is a revision of the *Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986*, which introduced the concept of EEO to Australia's statute books.

According to both pieces of legislation, employers of 100 people or more are required to report to the Agency on the initiatives they take within their organisations to advance women in the workplace. Under the terms of the revised Act, however, the new role of the Agency is to collaborate more flexibly and pro-actively with stakeholders to effectively advance both women and business.

All private-sector organisations, higher education institutions, group training organisations, unions, community organisations and non-Government schools with more than 100 employees are covered by the Act, and are obliged to submit a compliance report to EOWA.

With a vision to create an Australia where every woman in the workplace can achieve her greatest potential, EOWA inspires Australian employers to take action to improve outcomes for working women. It does so by delivering practical solutions to employers for advancing women, by building strategic partnerships with employer organisations, and by leading public debate to increase the rate of change.

EOWA's annual Business Achievements Awards is a critical event in the EOWA calendar as a way of focusing attention on working women, and putting Equal Opportunity in employment on the national agenda.