

Blake Dawson Waldron

Background

Blake Dawson Waldron is one of Australia's leading commercial law firms. We are recognised for our technical excellence, our business insight, and our ability to provide clients with clear, commercially astute solutions. Our focus is on the law as it relates to corporate and commercial activity, and our experience cuts across all industries. We have a nationally integrated partnership with offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane and Perth, and overseas in Shanghai, Port Moresby and Jakarta.

Blake Dawson Waldron was named 'Australian Law Firm of the Year' in November 2006 by Chambers Global, the world's leading law firm directory. Blake Dawson Waldron is the only law firm to have continuously held the EOWA citation since it was first awarded in 2000-2001. On Wednesday 7 March 2007, the firm will host the launch of the HREOC final report in their Striking the Balance enquiry: *It's About Time: Women, men, work and family*.

BDW People at a glance

- Mary Padbury appointed Chairman of Partners 1 July 2005.
- 80% of our support staff directors are female (including our IT director).
- 25% of the firm's practice leaders are female.
- The percentage of female partners at Blake Dawson Waldron has increased from 17% to 20% over the past 12 months.
- 30% of senior associates promoted to partner over the past 12 months are female.
- 50% of our lateral partner appointments so far in 2007 are female..
- 49% of lawyers promoted to senior associate were female and 50% of our lateral senior associate appointments were female as at 1 July 2006.
- 63% of our graduates are female.
- The firm's flexible work policy has been in place since 1999. Approximately 14% of our staff work part-time

Our Policies at a glance

BDW has implemented a range of policy initiatives designed to support staff development. These policies, available to all staff, provide flexibility and career option opportunities. They assist staff to manage their work and lifestyle responsibilities. Key policies include:

- **Parental Leave** – including a paid component for eligible staff.
- **Flexible Work Options** – the firm has a range of flexible work arrangements including job-share, working from home, part-time work and flexible working hours.
- **Additional Leave** - allows staff to 'purchase' an additional amount of leave annually.
- **Personal Carer's Leave** - allowing increased flexibility in leave arrangements and to help all staff members cope with unexpected emergency situations.
- **Leave of Absence** - The leave of absence policy provides eligible employees with extended leave (between 3 weeks and 2 years) for personal and professional development purposes. This includes professional work experience, travel, domestic/family reasons, community service or education.
- **Support for Continuing Education** - The firm reimburses staff for course fees once an approved course has been successfully completed. .

- **Study Leave** - Full time staff are entitled to take up to 5 days' paid study/exam leave per annum as part of the Support for Continuing Education policy.

Initiatives and achievements at a glance

Over the past 12-18 months the firm has:

- Completed a national review of our Flexible Work Practices, involving more than 300 partners and staff. The Review examined our current flexible work arrangements to ensure continued effectiveness of flexible work arrangements in future.
- Launched a new Flexible Work Policy, Procedure and Principles, supported by an intranet site with additional resources and training to assist partners and staff manage flexible work more effectively.
- Introduced a new Remote Access and webmail system available to all staff, allowing secure and quick access to the firm's IT network from any location (eg home, while travelling, interstate etc).
- Completed a thorough review of the firm's Career Management System (CMS) to clarify and promote the Career Model offered by the firm. The CMS is supported by an intranet site which enables staff to easily access all policies and associated documents, including promotion criteria and performance standards.
- Implemented "Developing Client Relationships", a new course for senior lawyers which assists them to develop various skills vital to developing strong working relationships with clients (an important factor in a successful career and promotion within the firm). This program is offered firm-wide.
- Introduced an annual Engagement Survey to measure our performance in critical areas including:
 - Career
 - Training
 - Flexible work
 - Leadership

Other Support at glance

Staff have access to Childcare and Eldercare Kits, the firm's Social Issues Forum, and various mentoring programs. The firm has had a dedicated Career & Development team within our People Development team since 2005.

Media Contact

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