

Mallesons Stephen Jaques

Mallesons Stephen Jaques is a leading international commercial law firm with offices in Australia's main business centres, Hong Kong, Beijing and London and an associated office in Port Moresby. The firm has over 900 lawyers backed by shared services and support staff, including technology, know how, information and research specialists.

Background facts

- 57% of those recruited to graduate positions and 59% of those recruited to seasonal clerk positions were women.
- 67% of those recruited firmwide (excluding graduates and seasonal clerks) were women.
- Promotion rates of female solicitors to senior associates have been almost equal to male solicitors in 2004 (44%), 2005 (47%) and 2006 (48%) - these figures relate to calendar years.
- Overall, the ratio of female to male partners at Mallesons has increased from 17% in 2004 to 19% in 2006 and to 20% in early 2007. The ratio of 20% female partners is higher than the legal industry average of 14% (AFR 12 September 2006).
- The firm is continuing its work to support employees in managing work flexibly. A reflection of this effort was the firm's 2006 ranking of 10th of 410 organisations in a national work/life survey for initiatives in this area.
- Currently, 14% of our workforce is working flexibly.
- In 2006, the firm's Chief Executive Partner and Board approved the creation of a new senior management position to focus on career progression and development and workplace flexibility, and the creation of a part-time EEO & Flexibility Manager role.

Policies and initiatives

Flexible working

Making work work, together is our program that incorporates many of the initiatives and policies we have in place to support the firm and employees to make work and life manageable.

Flexible Working policy supported by *Making flexible hours work, together* booklet covers how to manage flexible work and the options available such as: part-time, jobshare, remote working and teleworking.

Family events policy supports employees so they can attend important family events during work hours.

Meeting times initiative encourages meetings to be held between 9.00am and 5.00pm where possible.

Long-term leave of absence is offered to employees who wish to develop their careers outside the firm for a period of time and who want to return at the end of that experience to continue their career with Mallesons. The firm also recognises that there may be times when employees need unpaid time away from work for reasons that may not be career related and offers short-term LOA as a benefit.

Support for women and their families

Paid parental leave - up to 12 weeks paid maternity leave is offered, based on years of service. Short term paid paternity leave of one week is offered to fathers.

A Parental Leave Kit is given to women going on parental leave and to fathers whose partners are expecting a child.

When on parental leave women are invited to any relevant training and events and on their return from parental leave are supported through a buddy program.

Emergency childcare supports parents (women and men) to attend to urgent client or non-client matters outside standard working times or on days not normally worked, such as supporting women to attend practice group, senior associate and partner conferences. The firm has paid costs for several female employees to either bring their own nanny to the conference, paid for childcare in the employee's own home or provided on site childcare at the conference making these events accessible to all employees with childcare responsibilities.

Swap Pay For Leave (48/52) allows employees with school age children to swap pay for additional leave to be taken at school holiday time.

Childcare kits provide information to employees who have childcare responsibilities. They include issues to consider when choosing childcare, what options are available and emotional and financial considerations.

Work/life Links is a lifestyle research service to support employees with non-work related queries that need investigating ie from local schools to nanny services to drycleaners.

Eldercare kits provide information to employees with eldercare responsibilities.

Communication and information sharing to support our employees

Jugglers' Network was launched in May 2005. These are regular events that aim to assist employees managing work and life. On average, 90-100 employees (women and men) attend these sessions. An online forum has also been established. Sessions have been held on topics including: Fatherhood in the 21st Century, Playground Issues - Resilience in our children, Teenage Tango and Eldercare.

Health & Wellbeing program is a program of bi-monthly seminars and annual Health Expos for all employees. Sessions have included Cancer Awareness, How to relax and stop worrying, Emotional resilience, Diabetes, Diet and Nutrition and Sports Injuries. Employee-funded massages, pilates and yoga are available in the workplace.

'Ring the CEP' is an initiative that allows any employee to call the Chief Executive Partner directly on a set day each fortnight. Employees can discuss anything they wish. This contributes to the environment of open communication that the Chief Executive Partner and the Board are fostering.

Mentoring

The firm launched a mentoring program in February 2005 which is open to all employees. Over 600 employees now participate in the program of which 55% are women.

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