



media release

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2004 - 05 EOWA ANNUAL REPORT

EEO is new business weapon

The EOWA 2004-05 Annual Report which includes lists of Australia's EEO leaders and non-compliant organisations was tabled in Federal Parliament yesterday.

The Annual Report shows that 115 organisations have been waived from their reporting requirements for up to two years as a result of their excellent workplace programs and initiatives.

14 organisations have breached the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* and been assessed as non-compliant, down from 17 in 2003-04. As a result, they are ineligible to tender for any Government contracts and receive industry assistance.

The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* requires organisations with more than 100 staff to report to EOWA annually on the initiatives they have taken to address issues for women in their workplace. Organisations need to demonstrate that they have identified issues affecting their female employees and are taking actions to address them.

"Australian business culture is clearly in transition with respect to how women are regarded and treated in the workplace," said EOWA Director, Anna McPhee.

Ms McPhee, cites trends such as an increase in the number of organisations offering paid maternity leave, an increase in the accommodation of requests for part time work after maternity leave, increase in part time management roles and greater focus on succession planning as evidence of the number of organisations identifying equity issues.

"However, despite these improvements, there is still a significant lack of women advancing to senior management and long term retention of women still poses a problem for business," says Ms Anna McPhee. "The new battleground for business is about retention and specifically the retention of women. EEO provides competitive employers with a further recruitment weapon to attract the best talent."

"Despite the small number of organisations who disregard their obligations, I have been encouraged by the growing number of Australian employers that see equal opportunity as a strategic business opportunity that, if done well, improves decision making, enhances reputation, improves working relationships and increases profits," said Ms McPhee.

[ENDS]

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