



**Media release**

**Embargoed: Friday 26 Sept. 2008 – 1.00am**

## **Community calls for action on pay equity**

The majority of Australians believe that the gender pay gap needs to be addressed, according to a new survey released today.

The Auspoll survey of more than 3,000 people targeted business professionals, including human resource practitioners from many of Australia's biggest companies, in addition to 1,200 ordinary Australians.

Conducted on behalf of The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency and Diversity Council Australia the ground-breaking poll showed:

- 82% of the general community and 94% of the business community are aware Australian women, on average, earn less than Australian men;
- 80% of the general community and 96% of the business community believe that action must be taken to close the gap between men and women's earnings;
- 88% of the general community and 61% of the business community don't have a full understanding of pay equity.

EOWA Director Anna McPhee and DCA Chief Executive Officer Nareen Young welcomed the poll, saying the results were proof that Australians now recognised there is an unfair gap between wages for men and women.

"Pay equity is not just about equal pay for equal work," Ms McPhee explained.

"The 15.6% gender wage gap reveals the systemic discrimination in the under-valuation of women's work."

Ms Young urged the Federal Government to fund an urgent education campaign across the Australian business community.

"Now that people recognise there is pay inequity, the time is right for Government to examine what it can reasonably do to help change the status quo," she said.

"One initiative could be to educate business on how women's contributions in the workplace are under-recognised, undervalued and underpaid and then find ways to address these issues."

Anna McPhee and Nareen Young are both appearing separately before the House Standing Committee into Pay Equity to make submissions on behalf of their respective organisations on Friday, 26 September in Sydney.

Media: For further information or to arrange interviews with Anna McPhee call Rebecca Barnes on 0411 482 738 or for Nareen Young call Sue Bellino, CPR Communications, on 0400 188 825.

**EOWA** is a Federal Government statutory authority which administers the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act (1999). Employers of 100 people or more are required to report their initiatives to advance women in the workplace. [www.eowa.gov.au](http://www.eowa.gov.au).

**Diversity Council Australia** is the independent, non-profit workplace diversity advisor to business representing over 100 organisations, many of whom are Australia's biggest employers. [www.dca.org.au](http://www.dca.org.au).