

EOWA Survey on Workplace Flexibility



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Australian Government

Equal Opportunity for
Women in the Workplace Agency

The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency's Survey on Workplace Flexibility



The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA), with the support of Alcoa of Australia, is proud to release the results of its survey on flexible working arrangements.

The 2007 EOWA Survey on Workplace Flexibility reveals that overall, organisations with 100 or more employees are allowing flexible working arrangements to be accessed by more staff. While there remain discrepancies in the number of managers accessing these arrangements compared to all staff generally, the gaps are narrowing and managers are able to work comparatively more flexibly than in the past.

Organisations need to encourage both women and men across all levels and departments of the workplace to utilise the flexible working arrangements that are available to them. This will ensure that they are well positioned to tap into the widest talent pool and to maintain an engaged and committed workforce.

EOWA acknowledges the invaluable support of our survey sponsor, Alcoa of Australia. Together, we thank the reporting organisations that took the time to participate in this survey and congratulate the case study organisations whose excellent initiatives in promoting workplace flexibility are featured in this report: Alcoa of Australia, ANZ, Boral Limited, HSBC, Maddocks, National Australia Bank, Savings and Loans Credit Union and the University of Queensland.

We hope that the trend data and findings revealed in this report will provide organisations with benchmarks against which they can measure their own workplaces, and encourage them to reflect on what more they can do to further enable their staff to maintain a genuine balance between their professional and personal responsibilities and goals.

Anna McPhee
Director, EOWA

Alcoa is committed to equal opportunity and a more diverse and inclusive workplace. By developing an organisational culture that provides our employees with the opportunity to succeed professionally and maintain the essential work/life blend, we all benefit – individually and as a business. Our people are our success, so we aim to provide them with a vibrant place to work – a place they enjoy coming back to each day. I'm confident we are doing that because 60 per cent of our employees have been with us for more than 10 years.

At Alcoa, we continue to make significant progress on providing career opportunities for women. In 2008, Alcoa was named an 'Employer of Choice for Women' by EOWA for the seventh consecutive year. Currently, around 20 per cent of managers at Alcoa are women, up from only 3 per cent a decade ago. We are striving to increase that figure even further and I hope the findings in this survey will inspire other organisations to do the same.

Alan Cransberg
Managing Director, Alcoa of Australia

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Survey methodology

Under the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*, EOWA is able to collect information from reporting organisations in addition to that supplied in their annual equal opportunity compliance reports, via a short, voluntary survey.

The data in this survey were collected through telephone conversations between EOWA report assessors and contacts from reporting organisations between the months of May and September 2007, as part of the annual report assessment process for the reporting year 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007.

2007 EOWA Survey on Workplace Flexibility

For the 2006-07 reporting year 2,478 organisations were registered to report to EOWA in total and 2,195 organisations participated in the survey, constituting a survey participation rate of 88.6% of all 2007 reporting organisations.

The 2007 survey examined issues of work/life balance and flexibility. Organisations were surveyed on their paid maternity and paternity leave provisions, and the availability of flexible-working arrangements for managers and general staff.

2003 EOWA Work/Life Flexibility Survey

The 2003 EOWA survey also examined issues of work/life flexibility, and was conducted during the course of report feedback calls to organisations from June to September. A total of 1,595 organisations were surveyed on their paid maternity leave provisions, maternity leave retention rates, flexible-working arrangements and attitudes to managers working part-time. The response rate represents 63% of all organisations that were due to report to EOWA in 2002-03. Where relevant, data collected in this survey are used for comparison with the 2007 survey results to indicate trends in the provision of flexible working arrangements.

The published results of the 2003 survey can be viewed in full on EOWA's website at www.eowa.gov.au/Information_Centres/Resource_Centre/EOWA_Publications/EOWA_Surveys/2003_EOWA_Survey_Results_Work_Life_Flexibility.pdf.

The 2003-05 EOWA surveys were approved by the Commonwealth Government Statistical Clearing House (approval number 01186-02). The approval number for the 2006-2009 EOWA surveys is 01186-03. You may phone the Statistical Clearing House on (02) 6252 5285 to verify the approval number.

Paid parental leave

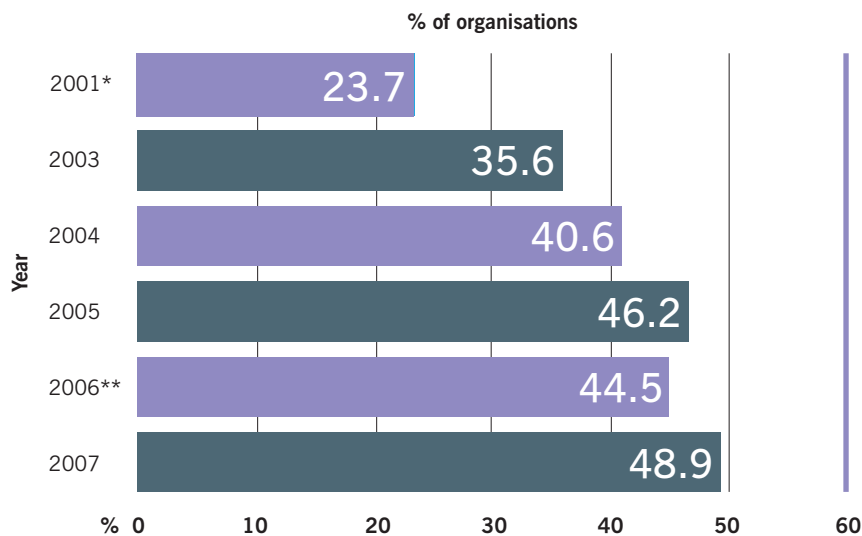
Paid maternity/primary carer's leave

Among all surveyed organisations reporting to EOWA, 48.9% say they provide paid maternity or primary carer's leave. This figure compares with 23.7% of organisations which provided paid maternity leave in 2001, when the first EOWA survey was conducted. While this increase is both positive and significant, it is evident that in more recent years, the rate of increase has begun to decelerate (see Figures 1 and 2 below).

FIGURE 1 Provision of paid maternity or primary carer's leave by EOWA reporting organisations



FIGURE 2 Provision of paid maternity or primary carer's leave by EOWA reporting organisations 2001-07



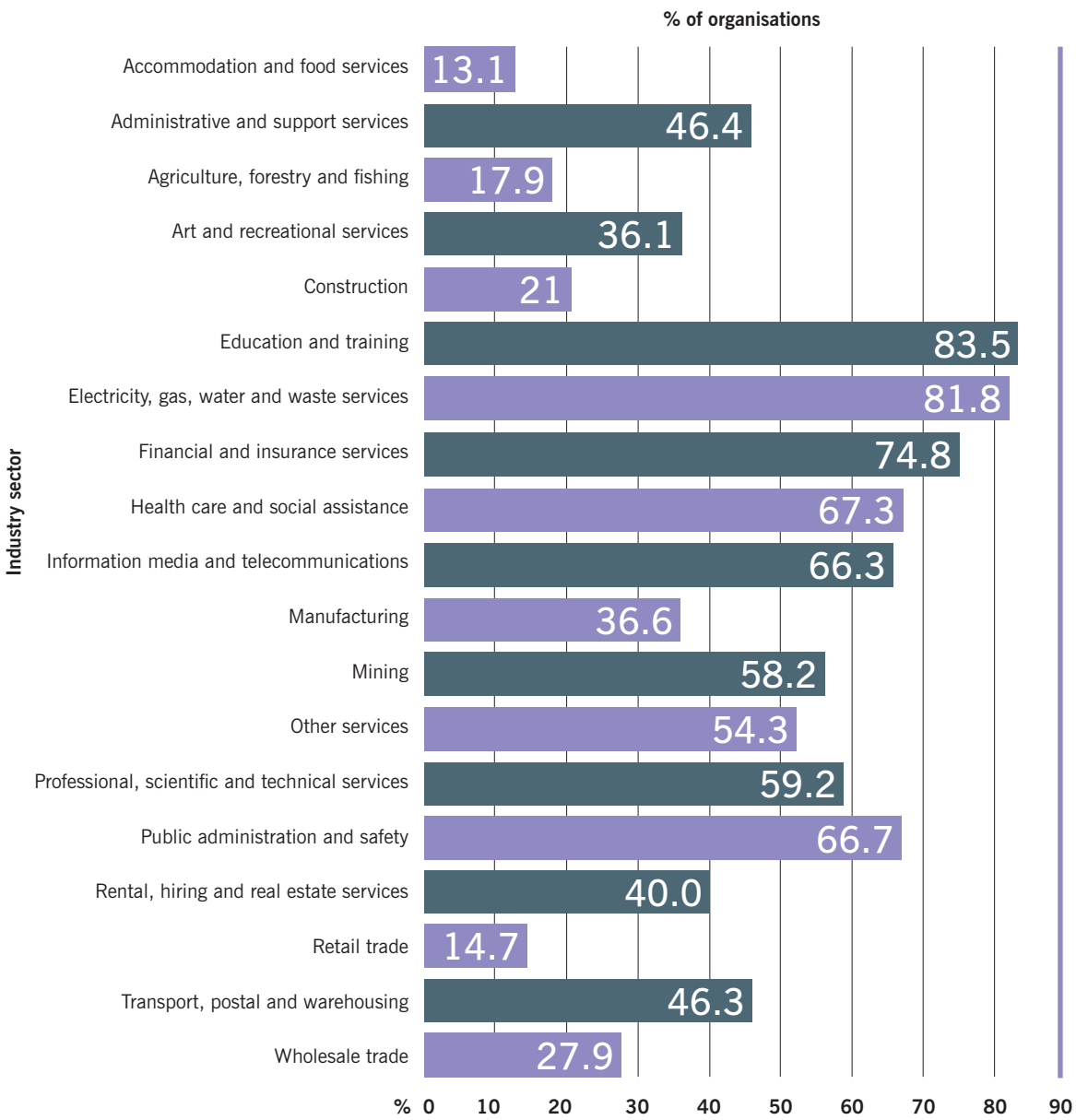
* 2001 data taken on 'Parental Leave'.

** The data set for 2006 was incomplete.

*** Data on the provision of paid maternity leave were not collected in 2002

In 2007, the industries most likely to provide paid maternity leave are Education and Training (83.5% of employers); Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (81.8%); and Financial and Insurance Services (74.8%), while the least likely are Accommodation and Food Services (13.1%); Retail Trade (14.7%); and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (17.9%). (See Figure 3 below)

FIGURE 3 Provision of paid maternity or primary carer’s leave in EOWA reporting organisations by industry



It should be noted that the 48.9% figure does not imply that nearly half of all women have access to paid maternity leave. Firstly, organisations that report to EOWA constitute only 23% of Australian businesses.

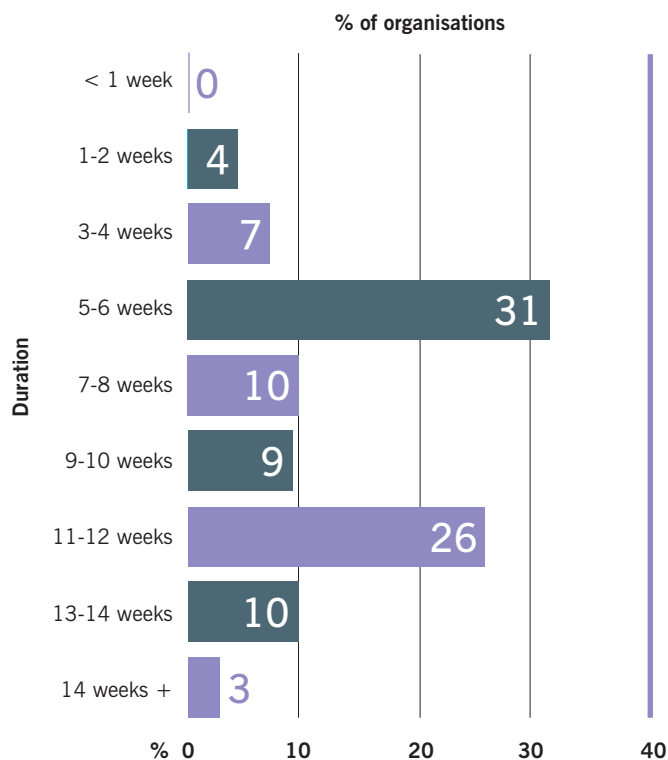
In addition, the Office for Women's 2007 report, 'Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer's and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises', revealed that only 19% of small and medium enterprises said they offered paid parental leave to their employees.¹

While female-dominated industries such as Education and Training and Health Care and Social Assistance constitute some of the highest providers of paid maternity leave, other industries in which women tend to be concentrated such as Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services (which employ nearly a third (32.3%) of women covered by the EOWW Act), are among the industries *least* likely to offer this provision to staff.

Furthermore, many organisations that do offer paid maternity leave only offer this provision under particular conditions, which may exclude many of their female staff. For example, casual, part-time or non-permanent employees, or employees who have not been with the organisation for a minimum length of time, may be ineligible to access paid maternity leave.

The 2004 EOWA Paid Maternity Leave survey indicated that among the organisations that provided paid maternity leave, 63% did not make the benefit available to all staff. Of this 63%, 85% confirmed that the provision was not available to casual employees or contractors.²

FIGURE 4 Duration of paid maternity or primary carer's leave in EOWA reporting organisations



1 (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

2 (2005), *Paid Maternity Leave Survey 2004*, Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency: 16, 21.

Figure 4 shows the duration of paid maternity leave as provided by EOWA reporting organisations. Most commonly, 5-6 weeks of paid maternity is offered (31% of organisations providing paid maternity leave), followed by 11-12 weeks (26% of organisations). The average number of weeks provided as paid maternity leave among EOWA organisations is 8.9 weeks.

It is important to note that paid maternity leave must now be provided by all EOWA Employer of Choice for Women organisations. Despite the minimum requirement being 6 weeks of paid maternity leave, the average duration provided by these organisations in 2008 is over 12 weeks.

The International Labour Office's (ILO) Maternity Protection Convention recommends that to 'promote equality of women in the workforce and the health and safety of the mother and child', women should be entitled to a minimum period of 14 weeks' maternity leave.³ Only 3% of EOWA reporting organisations that offer the provision provide the full 14-week period recommended by the ILO as paid leave.

Paid paternity or secondary carer's leave

Among all surveyed organisations, 38.5% say they provide paid paternity or secondary carer's leave, constituting 10% fewer organisations than those providing paid maternity or primary carer's leave. This figure compares with 32% of organisations offering the provision in 2005 and 15% of organisations that provided paid paternity leave in 2001.⁴

Comparing trend data since 2001, the gap between the number of organisations providing paid maternity leave and those providing paid paternity leave has not narrowed significantly over the past six years. A considerable number of employers are providing paid maternity leave but do not offer fathers or secondary carers the opportunity to take paid leave to share in the caring of and bonding with the newborn child.

The most common duration of paid paternity or secondary carer's leave in 2007 is 1-10 days, which is provided by 89.3% of employers offering paid paternity leave. The average number of days provided by reporting organisations is 8.7 days. (see Figure 6)

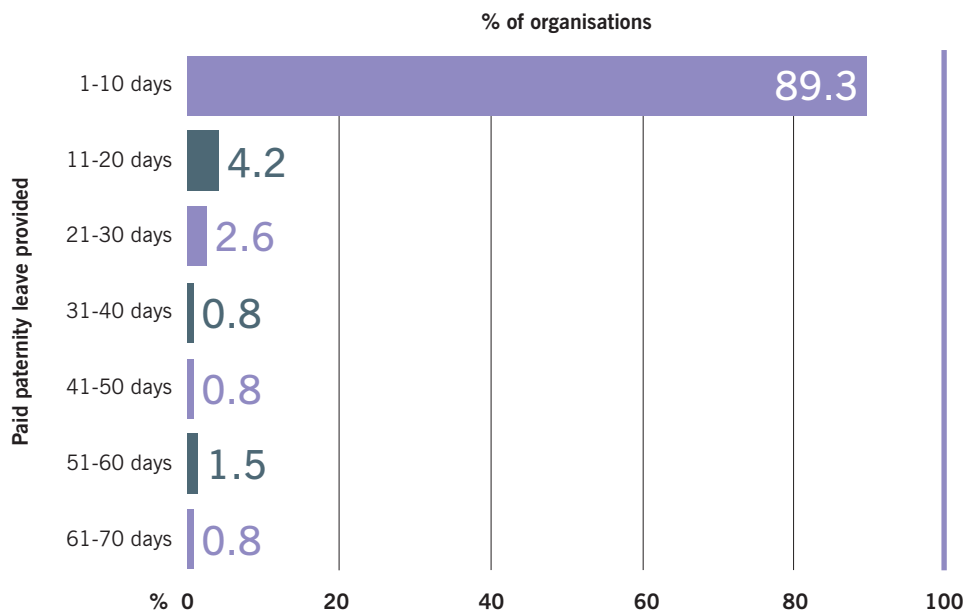
FIGURE 5 Provision of paid paternity or secondary carer's leave in EOWA reporting organisations



3 International Labour Organisation, *C183 Maternity Protection Convention 2000*, ILO. <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C183>. (Viewed 25 June 2008)

4 Paid paternity leave data for 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006 were not collected.

FIGURE 6 Duration of paid paternity or secondary carer's leave in EOWA reporting organisations



EOWA's 2008 *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain* research publication on employees' perceptions and attitudes toward their careers and workplaces revealed that for both women and men, the current highest priority is family.⁵ Furthermore, a 2005 survey by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) revealed that 60% of Australian fathers feel that their jobs have caused them to 'miss out on some of the rewarding aspects of being a parent.'⁶

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (HREOC) submission to the Productivity Commission's 2008 Inquiry on Paid Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave included a comment by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the importance of parental leave for fathers to attaining gender equity in the workplace:

*'As long as women rather than men take time off to provide care, employers will still see women as less career-oriented than men, and do less to invest in their career opportunities...[I]f fathers were also to take leave to care for children on a comprehensive basis...gender inequity in employment would likely disappear.'*⁷

Employers should aim to avoid stereotyping women's and men's parenting roles and responsibilities and encourage both parents to take time off work to care for and form bonds with their babies if they wish to do so, by providing paid parental leave to both female and male employees. Paid leave for the adoption of young children should also be included in employers' parental leave policies.

5 (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain*. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Sydney: 15.

6 (2005), *Striking the balance: Women, men, work and family*, Sex Discrimination Unit, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

7 Adema, Willem, 'Babies and Bosses: What lessons for governments?' *OECD Observer* No 264/265, (December 2007-January 2008), in HREOC, *Submission of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to the Productivity Commission on the Inquiry into Paid Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave*, 2 June 2008: 33. http://www.pc.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/80984/sub128.pdf

case study

The University of Queensland

Parental leave is available to staff in same sex and heterosexual relationships. In addition to 26 weeks' paid parental leave for eligible staff, the University's Parental Leave policy provides the option of applying for part-time employment, including job-sharing for staff members who are either pregnant or returning to duty from a period of Parental Leave.

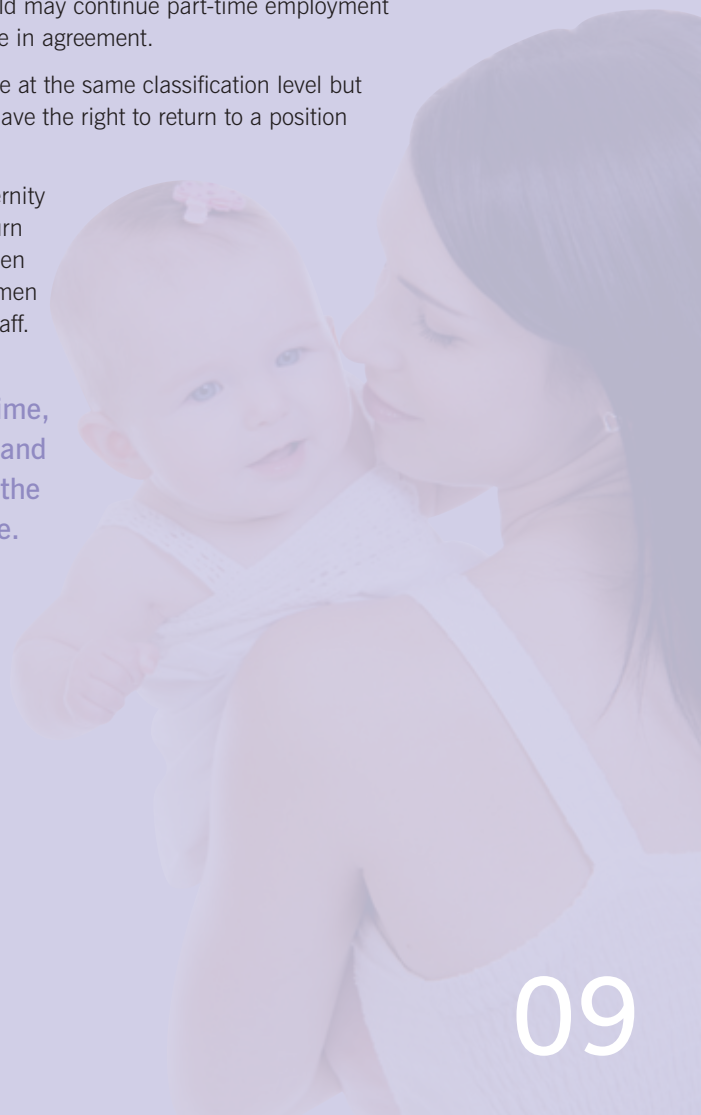
The Parental Leave policy states that a staff member's career will not be disadvantaged by having a child, and that the University will not unreasonably refuse a staff member's application for part-time employment on return to duty from Parental Leave or whilst pregnant, if the pregnancy makes part-time employment necessary or desirable.

A staff member who is the primary care giver of the child may undertake part-time employment until the child's second birthday, or in relation to adoption, from the date of placement of the child until the second anniversary of the placement. A staff member who is the primary care giver of the child may continue part-time employment past the child's second birthday if the supervisor and the staff member are in agreement.

The Parental Leave policy also states that part-time employment should be at the same classification level but need not be the same work as the staff member's normal position. Staff have the right to return to a position at the same classification level when returning to full-time employment.

As a result, a sizeable proportion of academic women returned from maternity leave to part-time work arrangements, although the majority chose to return on a full-time basis. There has been a reduction in the proportion of women returning to work part-time, though over the reported years academic women have generally experienced greater rates of part-time work than general staff. Very few resigned from the University while on leave.

More women in general staff positions return to work full-time, though a significant proportion return on a part-time basis and in comparison to 2005-2006, there has been a decline in the number of general female staff who resigned while on leave. The increased duration of paid maternity leave (26 weeks' paid leave) introduced in 2005 may be a contributing factor to this decline.



The provision of flexible working arrangements – an overview

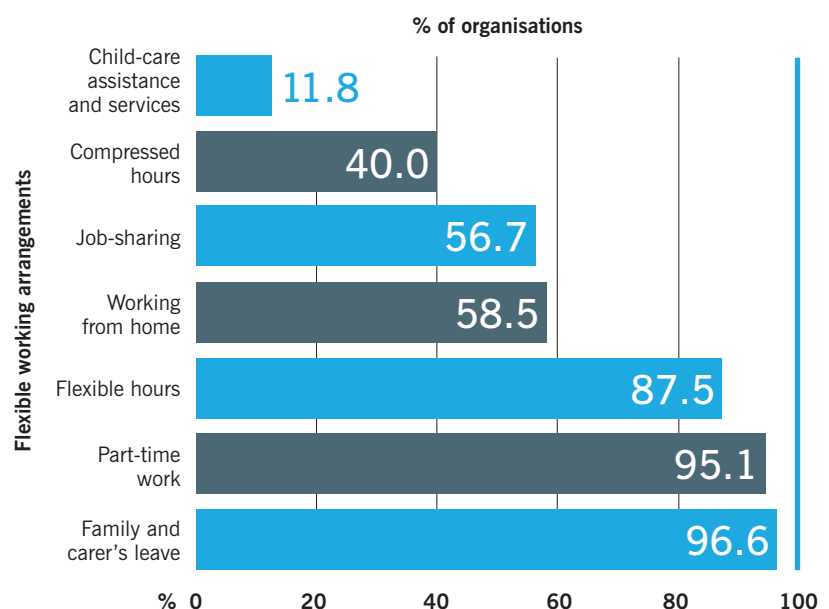
Overall, between 2003 and 2007, the provision of flexible work practices for all staff has increased.

In 2007, the flexible working provisions most employees had access to were family and carer's leave, part-time work and flexible hours (with 96.6%, 95.1% and 87.5% of all staff in reporting organisations accessing these provisions respectively). The provision least accessed was child-care services and assistance, with only 11.8% of reporting organisations offering this provision. (See Figure 7 below)

These figures reflect the same trends found by the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) *Child Care, Australia 2005* publication, which was released in June 2006. The ABS study investigated the uptake by working families (with children aged twelve years or younger) of flexible working hours, permanent part-time work, shiftwork, working from home and job-sharing. It was found that the most frequently used arrangements by working parents to care for children were flexible working hours and permanent part-time work, which were utilised by 41.2% and 25.3% of families respectively. Job-sharing and working from home were less commonly utilised, with 2.8% and 16.1% of families accessing these respectively.⁸

The October-December Hudson Report also found that the initiative most widely implemented by employers to maximise staff retention was flexible work options, with 67.5% of employers providing these. Employers found offering flexible work options was the most effective strategy for retaining staff, even more so than offering financial incentives.⁹

FIGURE 7 Provision of flexible working arrangements to general staff in EOWA reporting organisations

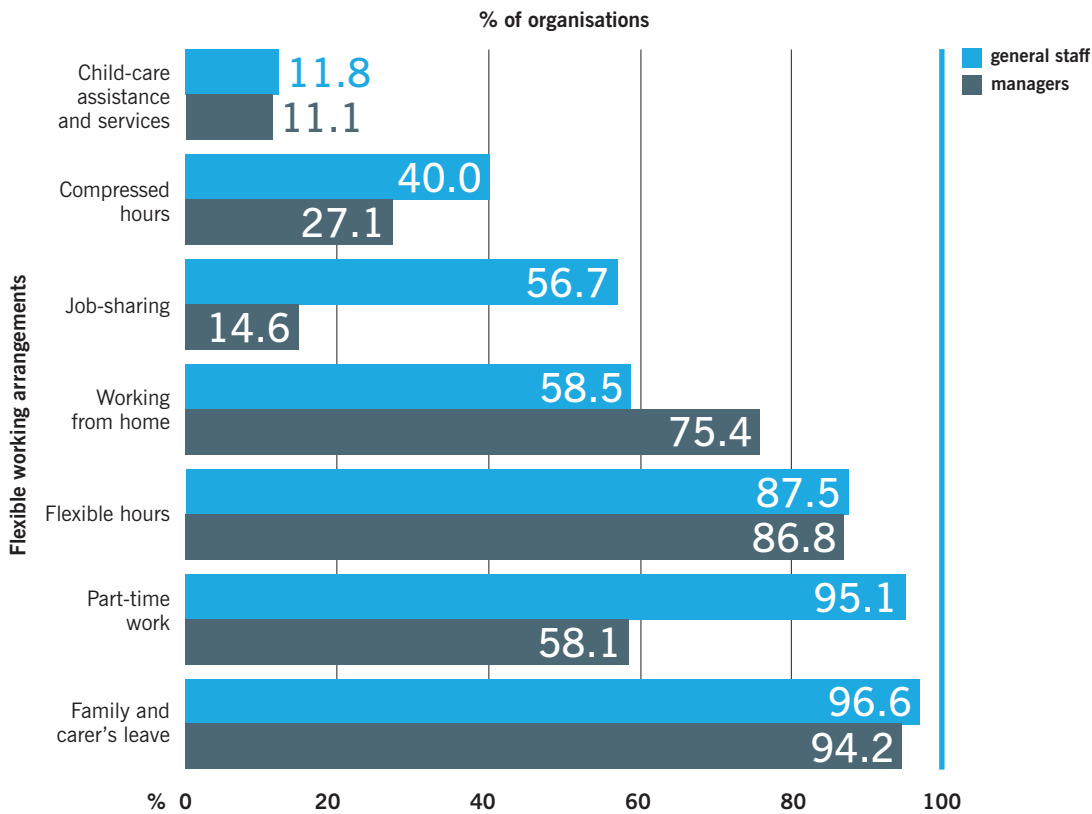


8 (2005), *Child Care, June 2005 (Reissue)*, ABS Cat. No. 4402.0, Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

9 (2007), *The Hudson Report: Employment and HR Trends October-December 2007*, Hudson: 1.

The EOWA Survey findings reveal that staff are more likely to have access to all flexible working arrangements than managers, with the one exception of the ability to work from home. While staff and managers are accessing child-care assistance, flexible hours and family and carer’s leave in similar numbers, the largest differences were seen in access to compressed hours, job-sharing and part-time work, which staff are significantly more able to access than their managers. (See Figure 8 below)

FIGURE 8 Comparison between managers’ and general staff access to flexible working arrangements in EOWA reporting organisations



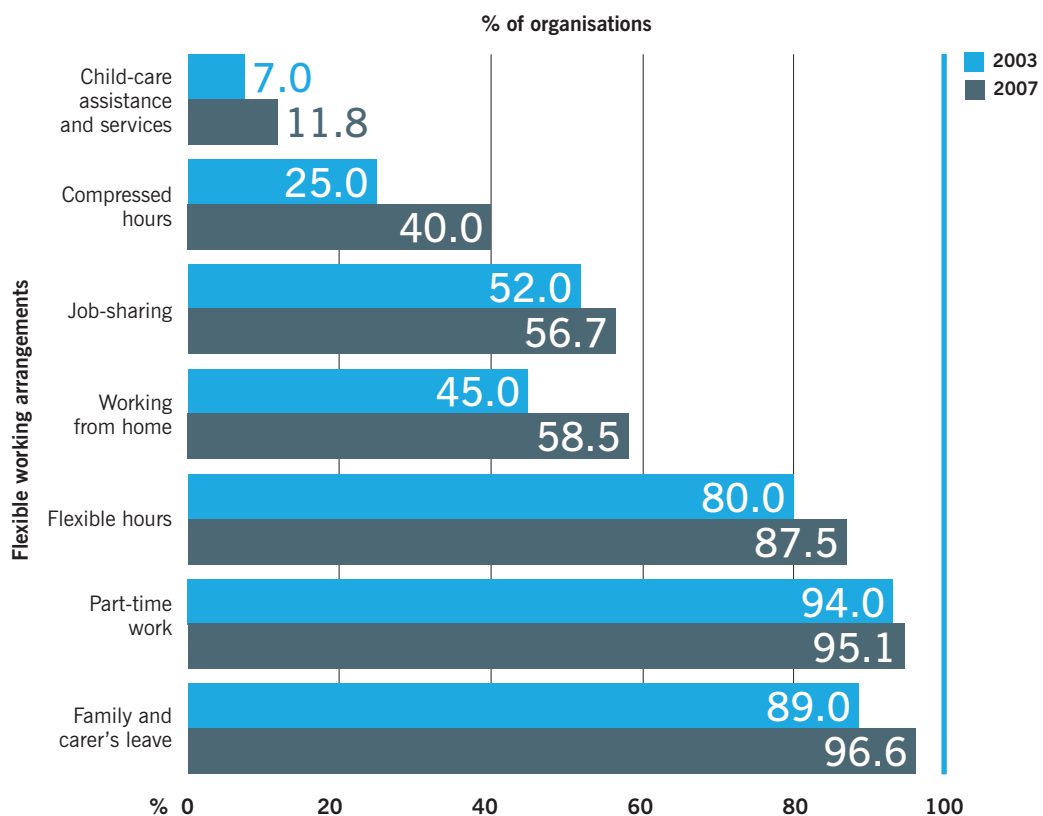
Trend data – A comparison of the provision of flexible working arrangements in 2003 and 2007

General staff

Comparing the findings from the 2007 EOWA Survey on Workplace Flexibility with those from 2003, the provision of all forms of flexible working arrangements increased over the four-year period.

The most significant increases for all staff were in the access to compressed hours and the ability to work from home, with increases since 2003 of 15% and 13.5% respectively, in the number of reporting organisations that now enable staff to utilise this condition. The smallest increase was seen in the provision of part-time work, however 95.1% of all reporting organisations are already offering this provision. Job-sharing and child-care assistance were the arrangements with the next smallest increases, with 4.7% and 4.8% more organisations offering these respectively. (See Figure 9)

FIGURE 9 General staff access to flexible working arrangements in EOWA reporting organisations: A comparison between 2003 and 2007



While it is positive to see the access to compressed hours increasing so significantly as the second least frequently accessed arrangement, it is disappointing that the provision of child-care assistance and job-sharing, the other two among the three least accessed arrangements, has not risen more noticeably.

However, these increases in the provision of flexible working arrangements are a strong indication that more employers are recognising the many advantages of offering them, including the improved wellbeing and work/life balance of employees, and the increased ability of organisations to attract talented staff and reduce attrition.

EOWA's *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain* research revealed that 83% of women and 73% of men consider an organisation that genuinely supports work/life balance to be extremely important when job seeking, while 12% of women and 11% of men said they left their previous job due to a desire for greater work/life balance.¹⁰ The same report also showed that 17% of women and 21% of men believed their employers offered no flexibility whatsoever, while over half of both women and men believed they did not have access to flexible working hours.¹¹

While it is extremely positive to observe from the 2007 EOWA Survey that more employers are taking action to help their staff to maintain a work/life balance, employers also need to carefully consider whether the flexibility policies and strategies being implemented are being properly communicated to and can be equally accessed by all employees, across all sections and levels of the workplace.

¹⁰ (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain*. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Sydney: 7 & 21.

¹¹ *ibid*: 24.

Managers

Compared to 2003, managers' access to all flexible working arrangements has increased in 2007. The greatest increase was seen in the provision of part-time work, which is being accessed by managers in 20.4% more organisations. The number of organisations providing managers' access to flexible hours and job-sharing has also increased significantly, by 15.2% and 14.1% respectively.

Regarding most flexible working arrangements, the gap between managers' access and general staff members' access has narrowed, indicating that overall, managers are accessing flexibility more equitably in 2007, in relation to their colleagues at different levels within the workplace. The most significant reductions in the gap between managers' and all employees' access to flexibility are in the ability to work part-time (an improved gap of 14%) and the ability to work flexible hours (an improved gap of 6.3%).

Although the worsening of the gap for the access to compressed hours and job-sharing were negligible, it is disappointing to see that against the trend, managers are not gaining any ground in being able to access these arrangements to the same extent as other staff members.

In addition, that the gap widened by nearly 7% between staff's and managers' access to working from home arrangements, the only flexible arrangement accessed more frequently by managers (see Figure 12), is also of some concern. Employers should ensure that both general staff and managers are equally able to access this provision. The increasing disparity between the numbers of managers and general staff members that are working from home risks stigmatising this arrangement as a senior privilege and may serve to deter general staff members from requesting it to improve their work/life balance.

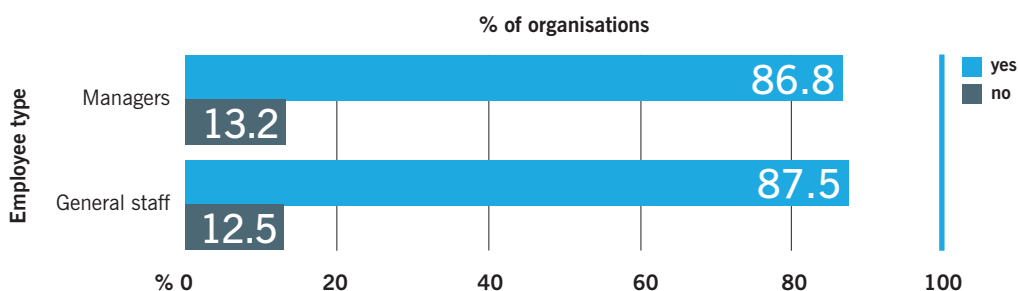
It is necessary that managers' ability to access flexible working arrangements is equal to that of other staff members throughout the organisation. This is not only to ensure that managers can similarly maintain a genuine work/life balance but also by 'walking the talk'; managers accessing flexible working arrangements can help to consolidate a workplace culture where working flexibly is considered the accepted norm. Staff will be less likely to be overlooked when pay rises, bonuses and development opportunities are awarded due to their having utilised flexible working arrangements, if their managers – and co-workers – are similarly accessing them.

Flexible working hours

Overall, 87.5% of surveyed EOWA reporting organisations offer their employees flexible working hours. While the survey question focused specifically on flexible start and finish times, flexible working hours also refer to flexible rostering and scheduling, and flexible leave arrangements.

Flexible working hours enable employees to fulfil outside pursuits and responsibilities that might otherwise coincide with standard working hours. For example, parents who need to pick up and drop off children from school or child-care may benefit from starting late or leaving the office early; early-morning sporting activities may be pursued and employees who are studying can take time out of the office during the day to attend classes.

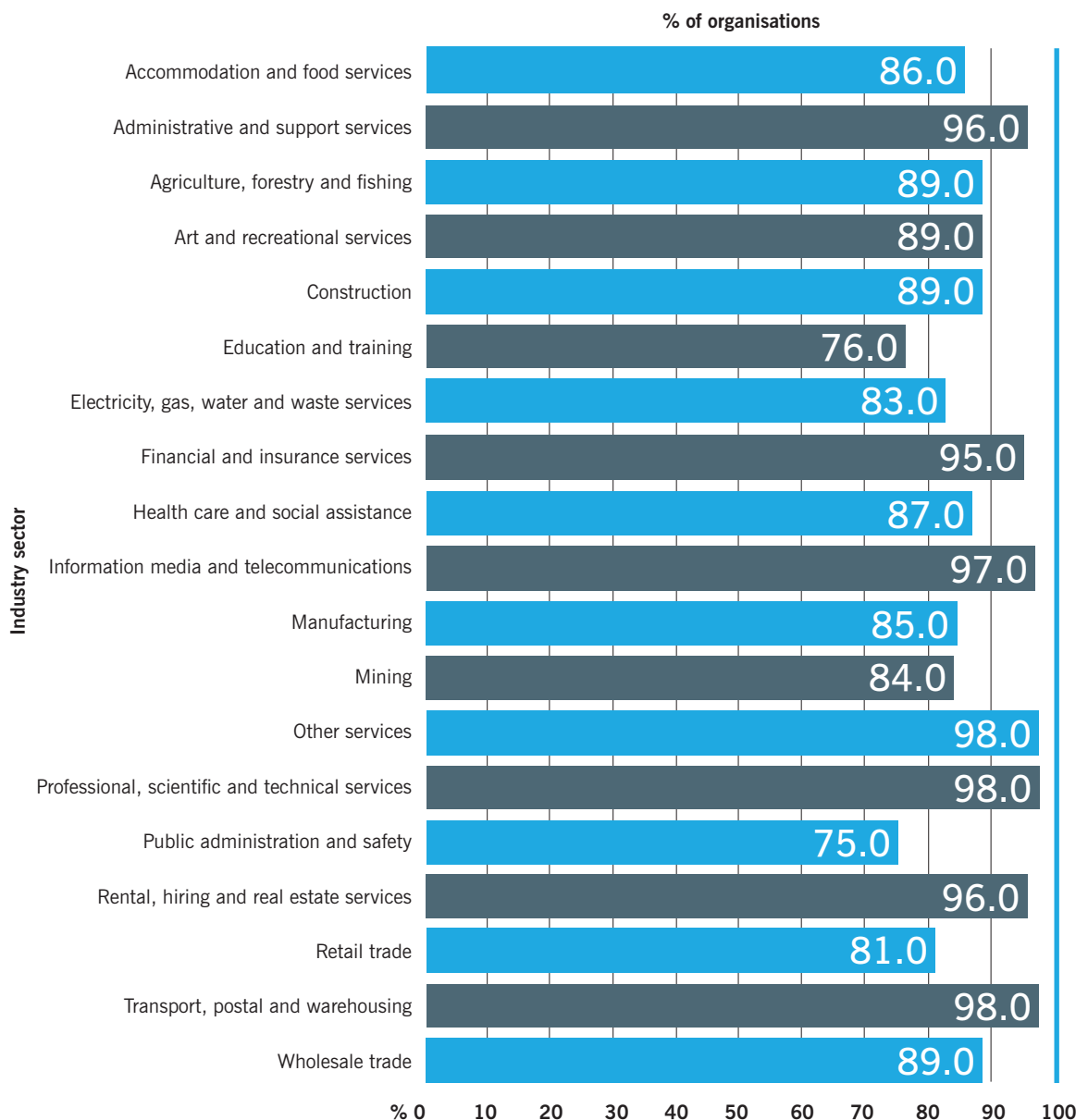
FIGURE 10 Access to flexible start and finish times in surveyed EOWA reporting organisations



The Office for Women's 2007 report, 'Better Conditions, Better Business', revealed that 73% of small and medium enterprises in Australia say they currently offer flexible start and finish times.¹² These businesses are thus less likely than the larger employers reporting to EOWA to offer these flexible arrangements.

However EOWA's *Generation F* report found that 55% of women and 56% of men do not believe their employers provide flexible start and finish times. In addition, 87% of women and 83% of men do not feel their employers provide staff with flexible rostering options.¹³ It may be therefore, that employers feel they offer flexibility but their employees have a different opinion. Again, this reveals the importance of consulting with staff to ensure that both employees and the business are actually benefiting from the policies in place.

FIGURE 11 Flexible start and finish times by industry



¹² (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

¹³ (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain*. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Sydney: 24.

case study

ANZ

In embarking on an ambitious strategy to double profits and become a 'super regional bank' in the next five years, ANZ has identified employee flexibility as one of its critical ingredients for success.

According to ANZ Group General Manager Human Resources Susie Babani: "Flexible working arrangements are central to ANZ people being able to fully contribute and achieve their best in the workplace. It also makes business sense by helping ANZ attract and retain the best talent in the market.

"A survey we conducted in 2007 identified that 52 per cent of ANZ people benefited from flexible working arrangements. As a result of these findings, we launched *My Flexibility* to further promote employee access to our wide range of flexible working and leave arrangements."

ANZ's *My Flexibility* options include flexible hours, job sharing, telecommuting, 12 weeks paid parental leave, part time work, child care, career extension for people aged 55 and above and carer's, lifestyle and study leave.

My Flexibility encourages employees and their managers to explore how flexible working arrangements can help people achieve their personal and career goals, while ensuring team and business needs continue to be met.

It provides policies, tools and support services to make the rollout of flexible work easier and to ensure that flexibility is for everyone – it's not about special treatment for particular groups.

Jacki Rush, an Area Manager in ANZ Business Banking Queensland who manages nine Business Banking Managers, is expecting her third child. Thanks to ANZ's *My Flexibility* options, Jacki works the equivalent of 3.5 days per week, spread over five days. Typically, she is out on the road twice a week meeting with customers and stakeholders to ensure her visibility, continue building quality relationships with clients and to coach staff. On other days she works from home, from where she is able to participate in teleconferences and catch up on general administration and email correspondence.

'It is important for me to balance my career with my family', says Jacki. 'If I didn't have the chance to return to a flexible work arrangement, it is unlikely I would have returned to the organisation.'

'I believe it works well for everyone, my flexible hours allow for some of my direct reports to step up into my role on Thursdays and Fridays when I am not physically in the office. This provides a great development opportunity for my staff and they really value this.

To date, I have only received positive feedback from my team, customers and stakeholders regarding my flexible work arrangement. I think the main reason for this is that I ensure my people are my priority and I make every attempt to ensure there is no impact.'

case study

Maddocks

Bronwyn works at the Melbourne and Sydney-based law firm Maddocks as a senior associate in the Construction & Major Projects group.

She is the mother of three young children (aged six, three and 18 months) and works part-time at Maddocks providing legal advice to the male-dominated construction industry.

Bronwyn supervises nine lawyers at Maddocks and heads up the Building Industry Regulation team. She is also one of four senior associates – all primary carers for their children and one of whom is male – working in a flexible working arrangement in Maddocks Construction & Major Projects.

Bronwyn works three days each week in the firm's Melbourne office. She is also able to work remotely when required and Maddocks has provided her with a laptop and BlackBerry to facilitate this.

Maddocks Construction & Major Projects group's collaborative team approach, and the firm's willingness to accommodate flexible working arrangements, allows men and women with personal commitments, dependent children or elderly parents to fulfil their care responsibilities while reaching their full potential in the workplace.



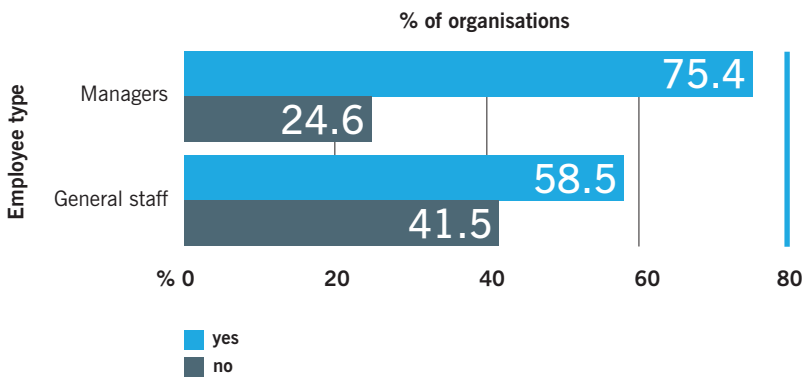
Working from home

Working from home can also be referred to as telecommuting or tele-working. It is the practice of employees working from their homes rather than at the employer’s normal place of business and can be undertaken on a regular, ongoing basis, or can be used as an occasional arrangement when circumstances require it.

This arrangement enables employees to reduce commuting time and work flexible hours, and is of particular benefit to parents with young or sick children, employees living long distances from the employer or employees with family emergencies.

Among EOWA reporting organisations, 58.5% say they have staff members who are working from home. 75.4% of organisations have managers who work some hours from home.

FIGURE 12 Organisations providing capacity to work some or any hours from home in EOWA reporting organisations



The importance of flexible working arrangements for all employees

Below are some suggestions for employers to attract and retain employees with different life situations and flexibility needs. While these will guide organisations toward developing solutions to tap into the wider talent pool, it is important to remember that there is no one-model-fits-all approach to providing workplace flexibility. Employers must consult openly and regularly with their workforce to be in a position to understand and address the issues their employees may experience in trying to achieve a work/life balance.

Employees are not a homogenous group; different individuals require different flexible arrangements to successfully juggle their professional and personal responsibilities and pursuits.

Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding

Pregnant women and women who are breastfeeding may at times be unable to maintain traditional working hours, that is, from nine to five, five days a week; they may need to attend medical check-ups and antenatal classes, or feed their infants during these hours.

A Toshiba advertisement promoting technology for working from home used the phrase, “she’s having a baby not a lobotomy”. To retain the skills and experience of women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, employers can implement flexible working conditions such as flexible start and finish times, working from home and compressed hours, as well as part-time work and job-sharing arrangements.

Employees with caring responsibilities

In addition to child-caring responsibilities, many employees are carers of elderly parents and family members with illnesses or disabilities. ABS research revealed that in 2003, 12.9% of the Australian population was providing informal care to a person who was aged and/or had a disability.¹⁴

While women are more likely to be carers and primary carers, it is important that employers do not make the assumption that male employees will not have caring responsibilities that require them to work flexibly. Many men are primary carers and others also wish to access greater flexibility to play a more significant caring role in their families.

Paid carer leave, flexible start and finish times, compressed hours and working from home are just some of the conditions that will assist employees to manage their caring and professional responsibilities.

¹⁴ *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, September 2004*, ABS Cat. No. 4430.0.

This survey was conducted by the ABS in 1993, 1998 and 2003. The findings from the 2008 survey will be released in 2009.

Single parents

Single parents are under significant pressure balancing work and family; they are both the sole carer and sole breadwinner, and must manage these responsibilities alone to provide for themselves and their dependent children. Too often, these employees have to sacrifice higher salaries and more desirable work in exchange for jobs that offer them the flexibility and proximity to home and schools, which they need in order to meet their families' needs. Quality part-time work, the ability to work from home, flexible working hours and paid carer leave can enable these employees to better meet their personal and professional responsibilities.

Employees residing in rural and remote areas

Employers in regional areas can often face difficulty in attracting the right staff because of distance and poor transport infrastructure. Offering flexibility through initiatives such as working from home, job-sharing and flexible start and finish times will attract a bigger talent pool including indigenous and non-indigenous employees who live outside of regional centres.

Mature workers

Mature workers may wish to cut back their workload and/or hours in the lead-up to their retirement, whilst remaining active in the workforce and in their current roles. The corporate knowledge, talent and experience of mature employees is valuable to an organisation and can be retained by implementing flexible initiatives for phased retirement. Job re-design into part-time roles, with mentor partners, job-sharing and reduced hours are just some initiatives employers could consider.

It is important to remember that many older workers also have caring responsibilities; many may be caring for dependent partners with disabilities or illness. The most recent ABS statistics on disability and aged carers revealed that 47% of older people receiving informal assistance were assisted by their partners, who tended to be older themselves.¹⁵ Furthermore, 2005 ABS statistics revealed that on average, 23% of informal care of children aged 0-12 years was provided by a grandparent.¹⁶ Paid carer leave provisions will therefore be highly desirable to many mature employees.

Employees with a disability

Flexibility in the workplace should not be made gender-specific, nor should it be disability-specific; it is important to avoid any stigma surrounding the uptake of flexible working conditions. Like all other staff, depending on their individual situations, employees with disabilities may benefit from different flexible arrangements. Employers should consult with these staff members and consider working from home arrangements, part-time work, flexible start and finish times and/or job-sharing where requested or required.

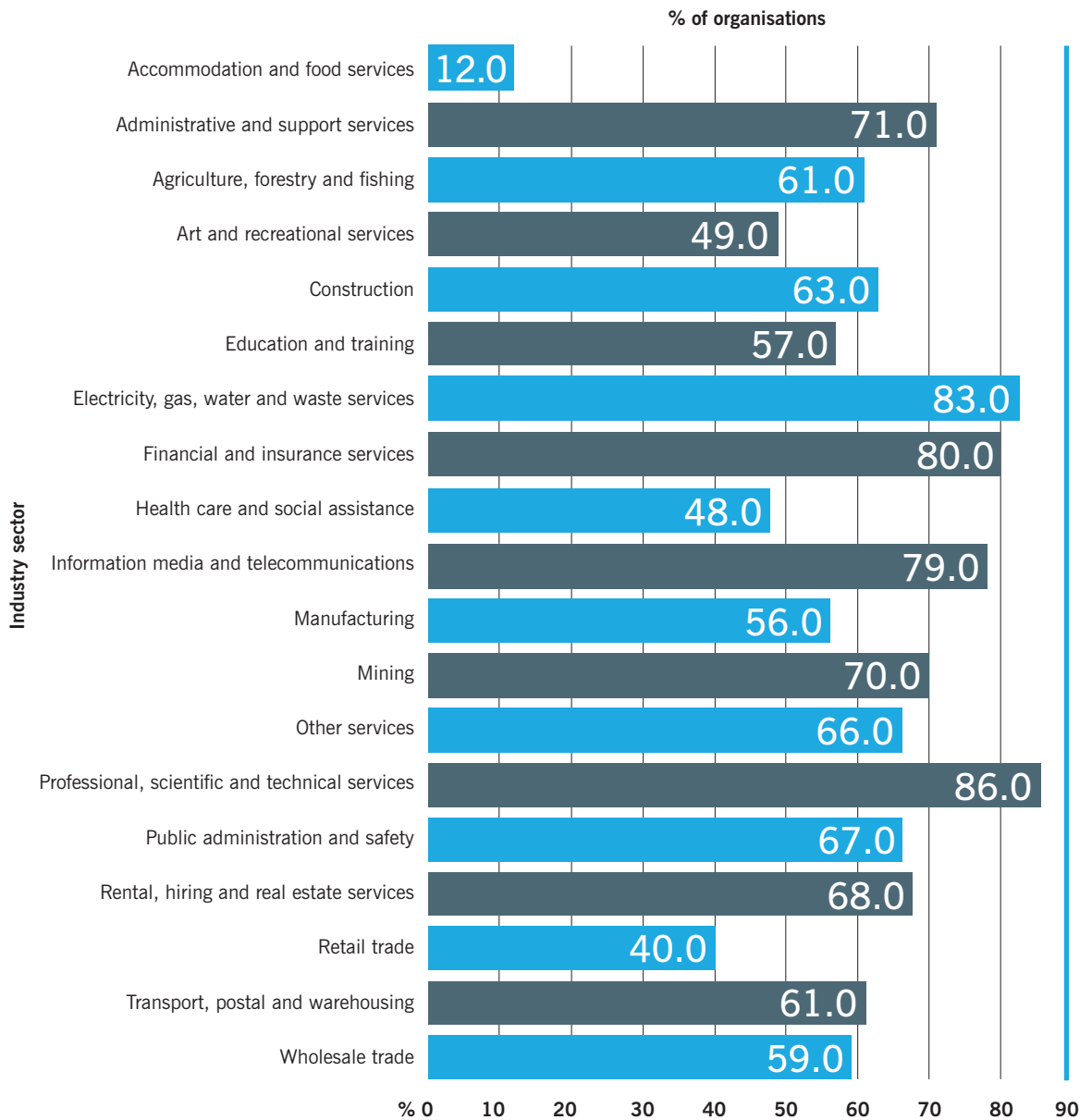
¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *Child Care, Australia, June 2005 (Reissue)*, ABS Cat. No. 4402.0, Table 1.

The Office for Women's 'Better Conditions, Better Business' report indicated that small and medium enterprises are quite significantly less likely than the larger EOWA reporting organisations to enable this arrangement, with only 30% saying they have staff who work from home.¹⁷

However, EOWA's *Generation F* report revealed that only 13% of women and 17% of men say their employers offer staff the opportunity to work from home.¹⁸ This may reflect that only certain employees have access to this arrangement, that staff are not aware of this opportunity, or that there is a difference in perception between employers and employees about what is available, again stressing the need for consultation and communication.

FIGURE 13 Working from home by industry



17 (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

18 (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency*, Sydney: 24.

case study

Alcoa of Australia

Alcoa has a Managing Director who practices what he preaches. Alan Cransberg, who has worked for Alcoa for 28 years, is a father of four and has made it very clear to employees that if their child has a special school assembly, then they shouldn't be at their desk. With this leadership, gaining loyalty and commitment from employees, as well as developing a sound platform of mutual respect is undoubtedly enhanced.

At Alcoa, it's believed that embracing women and providing flexibility for working mums makes good business sense. In an increasingly tight labour market, the company has found it enjoys a much greater talent pool of female staff by offering a level of flexibility.

Karen is an Information Systems Consultant, based at Alcoa's Point Henry Smelter in Geelong, Victoria. Karen has worked for Alcoa for 20 years and is involved in systems analysis and development, project management, systems support and database administration. Karen is married with two daughters and utilises Alcoa's flexible hours policy and working from home arrangements.

'When I returned from maternity leave after my first daughter, I remained full-time but did two days from home', says Karen. 'After my second daughter I choose to go part-time and Alcoa supported that. Initially, I was only working three days a week but I was soon offered more time. But when I explained that I would need to get extra child-care and it would therefore not work for me, Alcoa offered me the chance to work a number of hours from home for a trial period. I was happy with that, it worked well, and I recently increased my home hours from five to eight.

Having a flexible employer means I can volunteer at my elder daughter's school and that helps give her a sense of importance. I walk her home from school and we can then catch up on the day, instead of me rushing home at 5 or 6 o'clock to cook tea, do housework and only get half the picture of what is going on in her life.

The arrangements I have in place with Alcoa give me flexibility and the ability to fit it all in.'

case study

National Australia Bank

Over the past two years, NAB has taken a very deliberate approach to better understand how to create a more flexible work environment for all of its employees. NAB understands that the war for talent requires the bank to be more creative in how it sources, retains and responds to the varying demands and needs of its current and future employees, and therefore more effectively increase its talent pool.

The bank has approached staff in all parts of the organisation via numerous staff surveys about what it provides in terms of flexible working arrangements and how this aligns with what employees need now and also what they anticipate they may need in the future.

In response to the surveys' findings, NAB has implemented a number of initiatives to address employees' needs. For example, business-specific flexible working taskforces have been created. Executives have nominated their most talented people to be part of this group which works together to understand the issues and develop action plans to improve the practice and uptake of flexible working in their business units.

In a workforce notorious for its long work hours and inflexible working arrangements, the nabCapital Executive Committee has signalled a conscious shift by committing to role model flexibility and to ensure that every request for Flexible Working that is declined must be reviewed at a higher level.

Enabling more telecommuting has also helped the bank's environmental agenda. It reduces the carbon footprint of commuters and office space occupancy, reduces business travel costs and emissions, as well as travel-related stresses.

Compressed hours

Compressed hours allow employees to work an agreed number of hours over a set period of time to effectively manage their work/life balance. This arrangement often takes the form of a nine-day fortnight or a four-day week, with the standard fortnight's or week's hours compressed into fewer days.

Allowing staff to have regular days off during the standard working week enables them to commit to other responsibilities or pursuits. For example, staff may elect to engage in volunteer work, pursue their studies or spend the day with their children and families, whilst still achieving full-time working hours.

Among EOWA reporting organisations, 40% say they enable staff to work compressed hours. 27.1% of reporting organisations enable managers to work compressed hours.

FIGURE 14 EOWA reporting organisations providing the option of working compressed hours

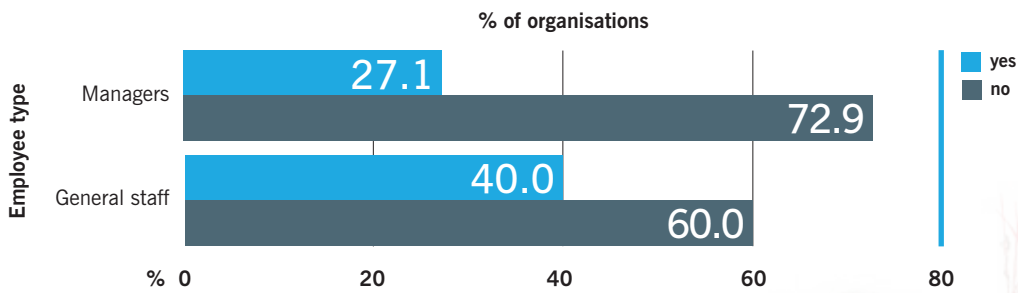


FIGURE 15 Compressed hours by industry

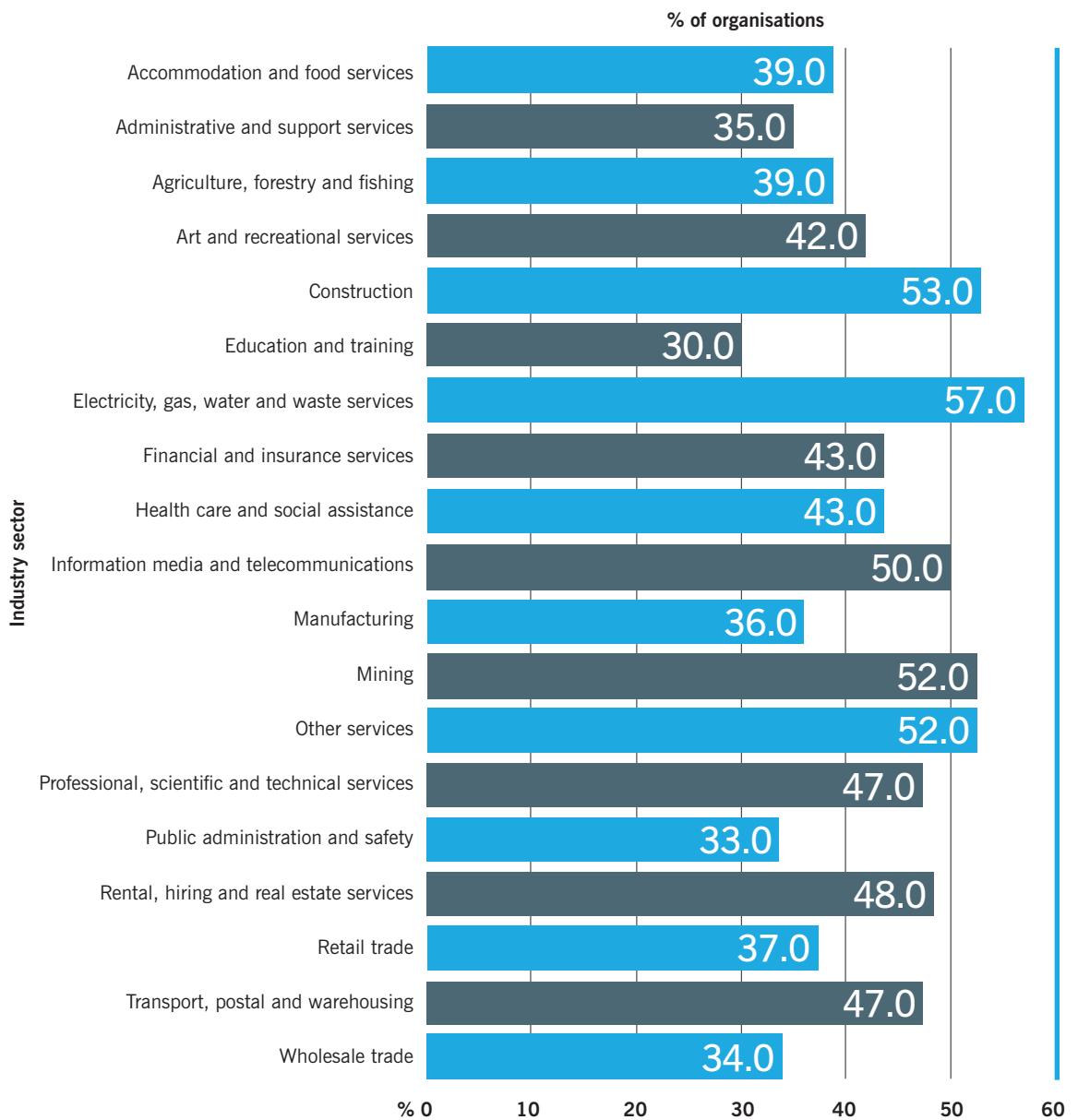


FIGURE 16 Provision of child-care services and assistance in EOWA reporting organisations

Child-care services and assistance

The provision of child-care services assists parents to participate in the workforce while juggling their parenting responsibilities. Among EOWA reporting organisations, 11.8% say they provide employees with child-care services or assistance.

'Assistance with child-care' might encompass, among other initiatives, the provision of child-care referral services, reimbursing staff for child-care fees incurred for parents to attend out-of-hours meetings or events, allowing parents to bring their children into the office when they are unwell or during school holidays and flexible start and finish times.

According to the ABS, in 2005, 21% of children in Australia aged 0-12 years received some type of formal child-care. More than half of those children were receiving child-care in order to accommodate their parents' work commitments.¹⁹

In 2008, the ABS reported that there were 1.7 million people who wanted a job or to work more hours, of which more than 61% were women who were unavailable to work in paid employment. For almost all these women (96%), caring for children was the main reason preventing them from actively seeking work or increasing their working hours.²⁰

Working parents' access to quality child-care is dependent on many factors including location, demand and affordability, thus any assistance employers can provide to their staff will significantly increase their capacity to participate in the workforce as they would wish, while fulfilling their caring responsibilities.

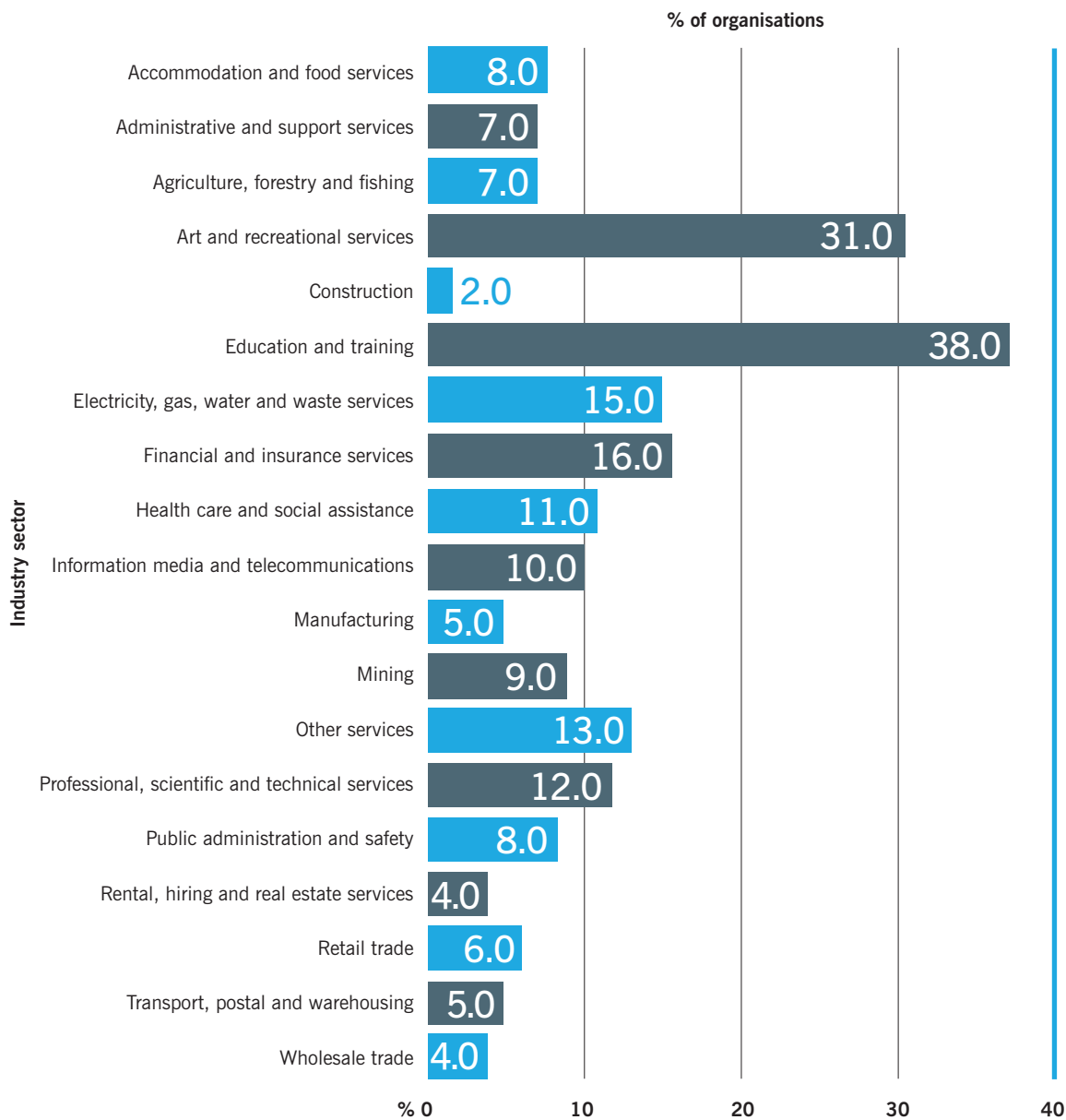
This assistance may be in the form of an on-site child-care centre, subsidised and/or preferential places in selected reputable child-care facilities, and arranging an agreement with the Australian Tax Office for staff to salary sacrifice their child-care fees and/or pay reduced fees in gross dollars, among other initiatives.

The provision of Child-Care Assistance and Services is most commonly provided by employers in the Education and Training Industry, with 38% saying they have staff accessing these provisions. This industry is closely followed by the Art and Recreation Services Industry, within which nearly a third (31%) of employers offer staff child-care services or assistance. At the opposite end of the range, 2% of organisations in the Construction Industry and 4% of employers in the Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services, Transport, Postal and Warehousing, and Wholesale Trade Industries are offering this provision to employees. (see Figure 17)

19 (2005) *Child Care, June 2005 (Reissue)*, ABS Cat. No. 4402.0., Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

20 (2007) *Barriers and Incentives to Workforce Participation July 2006 to June 2007*, ABS Cat. No. 6239.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

FIGURE 17 Provision of child-care assistance and services by industry



case study

HSBC

Diversity became part of HSBC's global 'people' imperatives over five years ago and the Bank embraced the job with gusto, establishing a Diversity Committee chaired by the CEO and made up of employees who became diversity champions within the business, providing valuable input into new initiatives and driving action internally.

Initiatives include transforming the bank's primary and secondary carer leave, establishing a flexible work policy, starting internal mentoring programs and launching an inclusiveness strategy with training for managers.

The HSBC Childcare Centre in Sydney opened its doors early in 2008 to meet the needs of its employees. Located at the HSBC Centre, the childcare centre has places for 80 children aged from three months to five years. HSBC has also obtained a private tax ruling from the ATO allowing employees to salary sacrifice the fees and pay less for their childcare fees in pre-tax dollars.

Carrie Cheung, Customer Retention Manager at HSBC, said, "I am so much happier knowing that my daughter is just a couple of floors away so I can see her at points during the day. I also don't have to rush out of the office and cover a long distance to collect her at the end of the day. I like the fact that she'll get to know the environment I spend my days in, and I like the fact that my colleagues get a glimpse of this important part of my life."

Family and carer's leave

Employees require flexibility and leave entitlements not only to care for young children but also people with disabilities and elderly or ill parents. In 2003, it was estimated that 2.56 million people, or 12.9% of the Australian population, were providing informal care to an elderly or disabled dependent. Women comprise the majority of primary carers in Australia (71%).²¹

In its report on the Inquiry into Balancing Work and Family, the House of Representatives' Standing Committee on Family and Human Services noted that being a primary carer reduces the likelihood of workforce participation by 30%.²² Greater flexibility and generous leave provisions enable those with caring responsibilities to manage both their work and caring responsibilities more effectively.

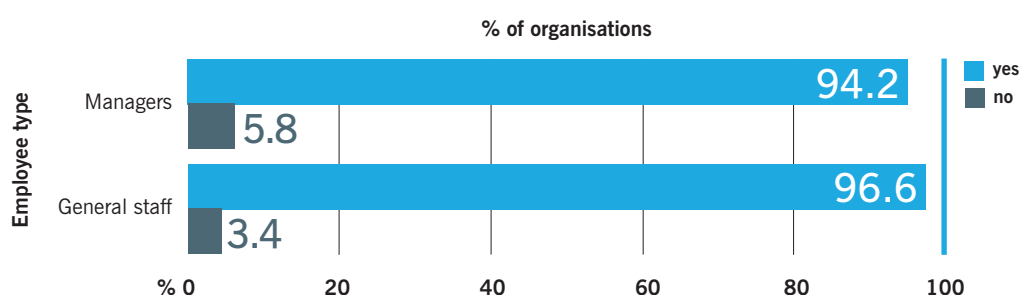
Among EOWA reporting organisations, 96.6% say they provide employees with family and carer's leave, making family and carer's leave the most commonly offered flexible working arrangement across all employers surveyed.

This differs somewhat to the arrangements offered by small and medium enterprises, which are most likely to offer flexible annual leave (provided by 83% of small and medium enterprises), and among which, 47% provide carer's leave for other family members and 42% provide carer's leave for children.²³

It is important to note that under the current, national Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard (the Standard), employers are obliged to provide a *minimum* of 10 days' *paid* personal/carer's leave each year. The Standard also entitles casual employees to a minimum of two days' unpaid 'emergency' leave.²⁴ Employers with staff to whom the Standard applies that do not provide these minimum personal and carer's leave provisions are failing to meet the conditions that should, by law, be guaranteed.

The new National Employment Standards, which replace the Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard and are to be introduced on 1 January 2010 include the same entitlement to paid personal and carer's leave and unpaid leave for casual employees.²⁵

FIGURE 18 Provision of family and carer's leave in EOWA reporting organisations



21 (2003) *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2003*, ABS Cat. No. 4430.0, Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

22 (2006) *Balancing Work and Family: Report on the Inquiry into Balancing Work and Family*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Human Services, Canberra: 275.

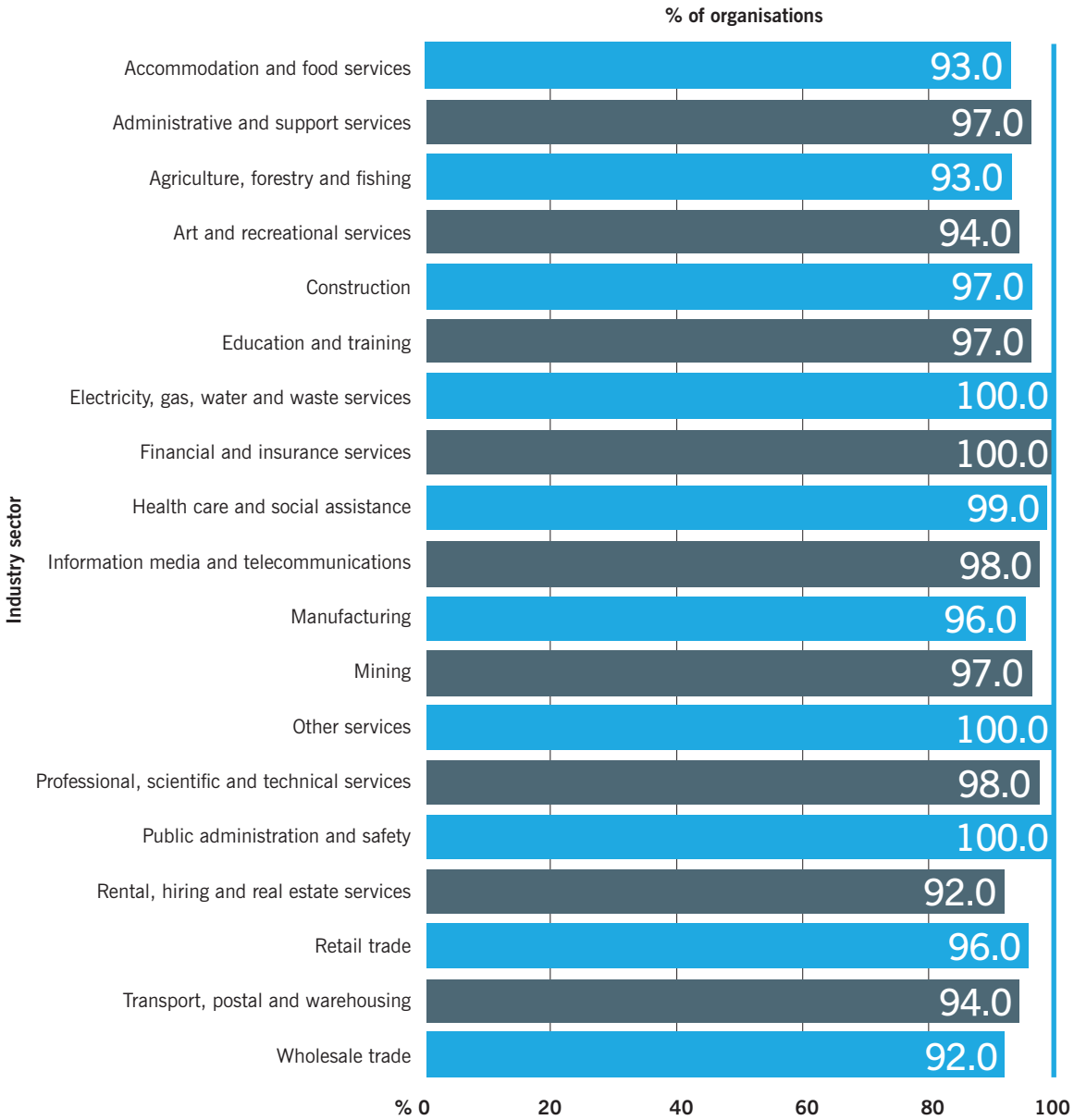
23 (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

24 The Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard Fact Sheet, Australian Government Workplace Authority: 14.
http://www.workplaceauthority.gov.au/docs/makingagreements/AFPC_Standard.pdf

25 (2008) *The National Employment Standards*, Australian Government, Canberra: 30.

http://www.workplace.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/1955FD28-3178-44CD-9654-56A3D5391989/0/NationalDiscussionPaper_web.pdf

FIGURE 19 Family and carer's leave by industry*



* It is important to note that under the current, national Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard, employers are obliged by law to provide a minimum of 10 days' paid personal/carer's leave each year. See page 28 for more information.

case studies

Alcoa of Australia

By taking the issue of work/life balance seriously, Alcoa knows it stands a far greater chance of attracting the right people who are best placed to assist in delivering bottom line results. For these reasons, encouraging diversity and providing opportunities for women to realise their career potential have been central strategies for Alcoa.

Wai Lim, an Experimental Scientist, has been part of the Alcoa team since 1992. She works in research and development under the Technology Delivery Group at the Kwinana Refinery. Wai Lim is the carer of her elderly mother, who also lives with her. She works part-time and has the flexibility to work from home when the need arises.

'Part-time works for me because I need to give support to my mother,' Wai Lim says. 'She's in her 80s and started to need my assistance due to her health. Being a carer takes a lot out of you and my work arrangements allow me the extra time I need for myself and my family.'

If my mum has an appointment at the doctor and the appointment falls in my normal work time, I have the flexibility to come in for half a day or work from home.

When I do need to work from home, I just need to inform my supervisor that I won't be on site but will be available on the phone and online and it's never a problem.'

Boral Limited

Kathryn, Architectural Team Leader

Kathryn joined Boral in April 2002 as an architectural team leader in Boral's Clay and Concrete Products business. She leads the masonry division in its dealings with all councils, commercial, residential and community building designers, architects, engineers and landscaping specialists: in fact everyone specifying Boral products in Victoria.

She has quite a workload involving a significant amount of travel by car throughout the State, including the daily grind of negotiating Melbourne's traffic jams on her way to and from work.

Managing the work/life balance is very important to Kathryn. She tends to take her company-supplied laptop home so that she can catch up on more urgent matters.

Kathryn and her son have Type 1 diabetes; coincidentally Boral and its employees have been the major Corporate fundraisers for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JRDF) for some time.

Not surprisingly, Kathryn and her family have been very active in working on JRDF promotions within the company – and Boral has encouraged her to do so. She has captained the 'Walk for Cure Diabetes' team, and also taken part in the Ride to Cure Diabetes, a major JRDF cycling event in Adelaide.

Kathryn said that she had received strong support from the company on the two occasions her son had been rushed to hospital. "They just said 'take whatever time you need to be with your family'. In turn, my son is actively involved with Boral as a Youth Ambassador, helping to educate employees about Type 1 diabetes and assisting in raising money for research, he loves the welcoming environment given to him when he visits Boral locations".

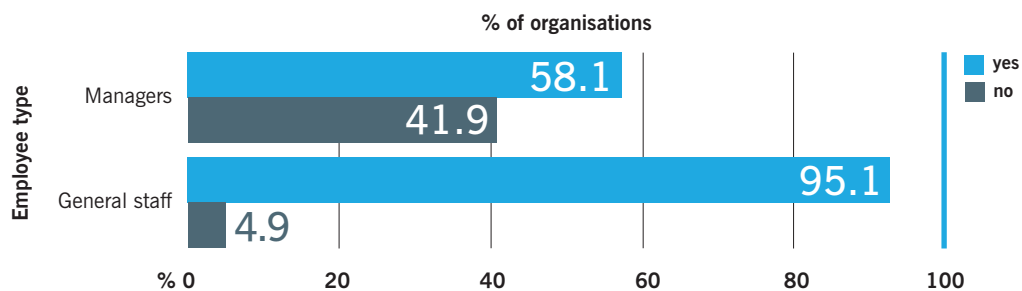
"If you are passionate about your job, which I am, it is a matter of working as a team with your family and properly planning out the days ahead. I coordinate with my husband and my 15-year-old son to make it happen," Kathryn said. "The support of Boral in helping me to achieve this is very important."

Part-time work

Working part-time may enable employees to balance their caring responsibilities, study, run a side business, ease into retirement or pursue personal interests, and can enable not only women with children but women and men of all ages and life situations, to establish and maintain a work/life balance.

Among all surveyed EOWA organisations, 95.1% reported that they currently have staff members who are working part-time hours. 58.1% of organisations have managers working part-time. This compares to the 61% of small and medium enterprises that are reported by the Office for Women as saying they currently offer part-time work.²⁶

FIGURE 20 Capacity to work part-time in EOWA reporting organisations in 2007



EOWA's *Generation F* report found that only half (52%) of Australian women and not even one quarter (22%) of Australian men believe their current workplace offers satisfactory part-time employment opportunities.²⁷

The ABS reported that of the one million people who are either job-seeking or wanting to increase their working hours, 75% said that they would prefer to work part-time hours. The average number of preferred hours sought was 25 hours per week for men and 20 for women.²⁸ Employers' ability to tap into the wider talent pool therefore, will be increased through the availability of part-time employment.

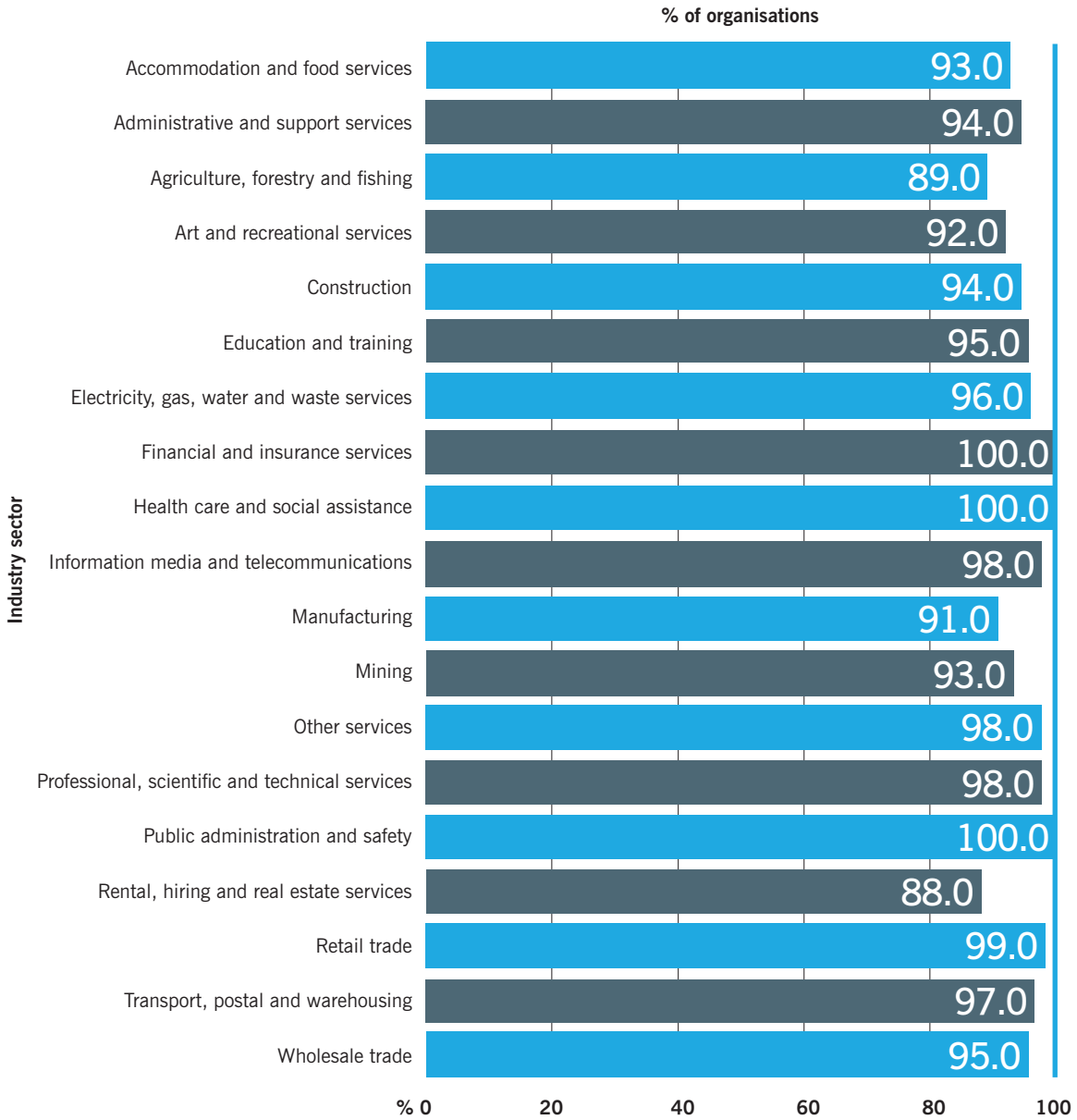
One of the issues of which employers need to be aware when providing part-time work is that if an employee has been working in the position on a full-time basis and then converts to part-time hours, the job will need to be redesigned to accommodate the fewer hours. A common complaint from women returning from maternity leave to a part-time position is that their full-time job has not been redesigned and in effect, they are simply squeezing a full-time workload into part-time hours and getting paid less as a result.

²⁶ (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

²⁷ (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain*. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Sydney: 16.

²⁸ (2007) *Barriers and Incentives to Workforce Participation July 2006 to June 2007*, ABS Cat. No. 6239.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics: 7.

FIGURE 21 Part-time work by industry



case study

Savings & Loans Credit Union (SA) Limited

Savings & Loans Credit Union is focused on attracting and retaining the best staff. In some cases this involves tailoring conditions to suit an individual's circumstances.

For example, the transition from Maternity Leave to returning to work is carefully managed. Savings & Loans Credit Union is dedicated to providing options to team members on their return including, full-time, part-time, flexi part-time, job -share and working from home arrangements.

As a working mother, Kerry balances her role as the Manager of Member Value and Retention with the needs of her family. Since having her first child over nine years ago, Kerry has worked part-time in a variety of positions with Savings & Loans Credit Union.

"Before I had my first child I was working full time, but came back from Parental Leave working two days a week, including working from home one day a fortnight," says Kerry.

"That arrangement seemed to suit everyone – I entered into a job share management position during this time."

Kerry now has two children aged seven and nine, and utilises flexible working hours to maximise the amount of time she can spend with her family.

"I work three days a week now and during the school holidays I spend one of these days working from home so I can spend more time with the kids.

During the school term I have the flexibility of starting early so I can pick the kids up from school two days a week.

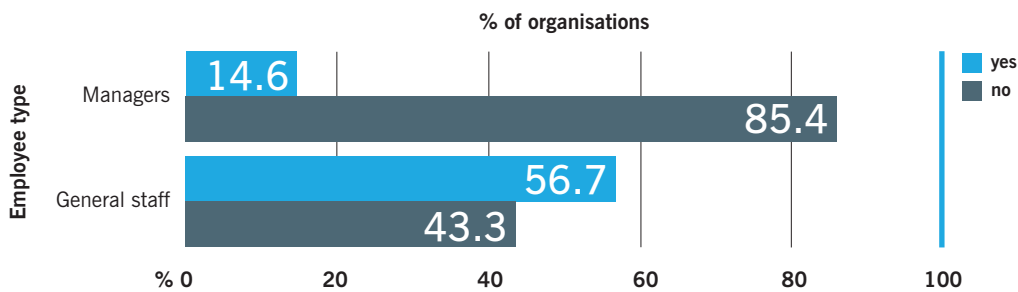
It's about flexibility from both parties; anybody who's worked from home knows that you rarely work in eight hour blocks."

Job-sharing

Job-sharing is an arrangement where one full-time position is shared by two or more employees, each working on a part-time basis. This arrangement is a practical way of attracting and retaining experienced and skilled workers who do not wish to, or who are unable to, engage in full-time employment.

Across EOWA organisations, 56.7% enable staff to work in job-share arrangements, however only 14.6% of organisations enable managers to job-share. This compares with 40% of small and medium enterprises that say they provide the ability to job-share.²⁹

FIGURE 22 Provision of job-share arrangements in EOWA reporting organisations



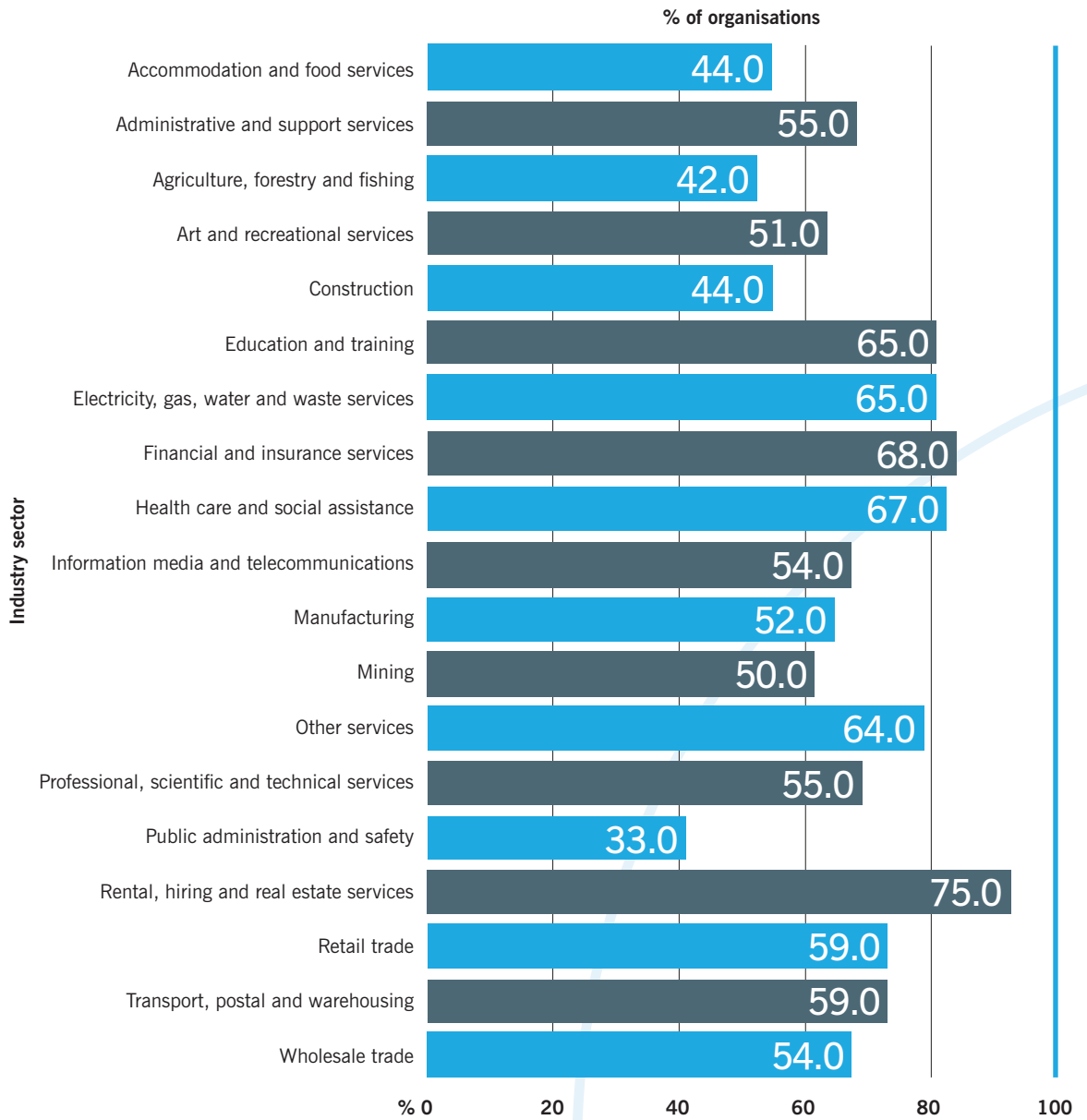
EOWA's *Generation F* research showed that only 20% of women and 15% of men said they believed their workplaces offered flexible working arrangements.³⁰

The industry most likely to enable staff to job-share is the Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services industry, with three quarters of organisations offering the arrangement to staff. Not far behind, 68% of Financial and Insurance Services and 67% of Health Care and Social Assistance organisations say they have staff currently utilising this provision. Least likely to offer job-sharing is the Public Administration and Safety industry, within which a third of employers (33%) say they have staff accessing this arrangement. 44% of both Accommodation and Food Services and Construction organisations have staff who are accessing job-share arrangements. (see Figure 23)

29 (2007), *Better Conditions, Better Business: A report on carer and family friendly provisions in Australian small and medium enterprises*, Australian Government Office for Women: 7.

30 (2008), *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain*. Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Sydney: 24.

FIGURE 23 The ability to job-share by industry

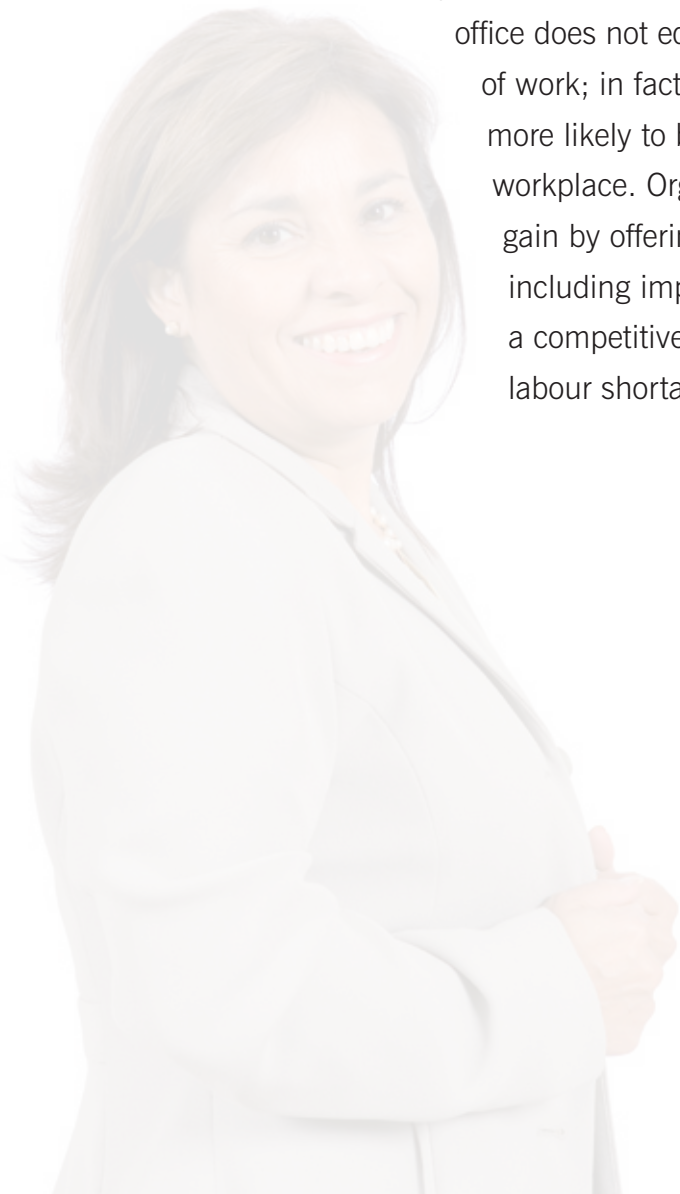


Conclusion

The ability to work flexibly and maintain a genuine work/life balance is important to all employees regardless of gender, age, life stage or position and is of particular importance to working women, who are more likely to carry the greater share of household and caring duties.

It is important that flexible working arrangements do not become stigmatised in the workplace, resulting in those who are perceived as more likely to access these arrangements being disadvantaged in recruitment processes and when promotions, bonuses and development opportunities are awarded. All employees need to achieve a work/life balance, whether to fulfil their family responsibilities, or pursue other activities such as study, private businesses and sporting activities.

Employers need to recognise that more hours spent in the office does not equate to increased productivity or quality of work; in fact, employees who work flexibly are more likely to be engaged in and committed to their workplace. Organisations therefore have much to gain by offering staff flexible working arrangements, including improved access to the wider talent pool, a competitive edge in the current climate of a skilled labour shortage, and a reduction in attrition rates.



Technical notes

The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* requires private-sector organisations with 100 or more employees to provide an annual compliance report on the equal opportunity programs within their workplace. The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA), a Commonwealth statutory authority, is responsible for assessing these reports.

Equal opportunity compliance data

In accordance with the Act, EOWA assesses organisations based on whether they are compliant with the Act, eligible to be waived from reporting requirements for a specified period or non-compliant with the Act. Employers report to EOWA on:

- the composition of their workforce
- staff consultation processes
- issues for women in their organisation across the seven Employment Matters
- actions taken
- evaluation of the actions taken
- planned future actions.

This provides EOWA with the opportunity to observe and collect data on the actions and initiatives being undertaken by reporting organisations to promote equal opportunity for women in the workplace.

Glossary

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

EOWA's primary role is to:

- Administer the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*
- Provide information, advice and resources to reporting organisations and members of the broader community to achieve equal opportunity for women in the workplace.

Equal Opportunity Compliance Reporting

Employers covered by the Act are required to report annually on their equal opportunity workplace program to EOWA. EOWA Client Consultants review these reports and work with employers to ensure compliance with the legislation, strategic development of EO policies and practice and improvement in employment outcomes for women.

Using this information, EOWA identifies:

- Organisations that comply with the legislation
- Organisations that do not comply with the legislation
- Organisations eligible to be Waived from reporting for a limited number of years.

Employers Covered by the Act

Employers covered by the Act include private-sector companies, community organisations, non-government schools, trade unions and group training companies with 100 or more employees.

Employment Matters (EMs)

The seven Employment Matters listed in the Act are:

- The recruitment procedure, and selection criteria, for appointment or engagement of persons as employees
- The promotion, transfer and termination of employment of employees
- Training and development for employees
- Work organisation
- Conditions of service of employment
- Arrangements for dealing with sex-based harassment of women in the workplace
- Arrangements for dealing with pregnant or potentially pregnant employees and employees who are breastfeeding.

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace

Equal opportunity is generally implemented through a workplace program of policies and initiatives. Equal opportunity will be achieved when women have fair and equal access to employment opportunities and benefits, and are not inhibited or prevented from taking up those opportunities and benefits by any gender-related barriers. It means that all employees have an equal chance to compete for employment opportunities on merit.

Waiving

Section 13C of the Act provides reporting organisations with the opportunity to apply for waived status. This means that the employer is not required to submit a report to EOWA for a period of up to three years. Under the Act, waived organisations are required to continue to develop their workplace program during the waived period.

Workplace Program

A workplace program means a specific program designed to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken to eliminate all forms of discrimination by the employer against women in relation to the seven Employment Matters,
- Employers have analysed the issues relating to the seven Employment Matters that would need to be addressed to achieve equal opportunity for women in the employer's workplace,
- Measures are taken by the employer to contribute to the achievement of equal opportunity for women in relation to the seven Employment Matters, and
- An evaluation is conducted by the employer of the effectiveness of the actions and measures taken in achieving equal opportunity for women in the employer's workplace.

Under the Act, employers are required to develop a workplace program by:

- Preparing a statistical workplace profile of employees
- Consulting with staff
- Analysing the issues for women in the workplace, considering each of the seven Employment Matters to identify the priority issues
- Taking action to address the priority issues
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the actions
- Planning future actions

Further Information

EOWA was established by the Australian Government to assist employers to improve equal opportunity outcomes in the workplace.

Each year, the Agency identifies the leading equal opportunity practices of over 2,700 organisations through an assessment of their workplace programs and by assisting them to improve outcomes for both women and the business. This puts EOWA in a unique position to understand the challenges and constraints for organisations across all sectors of the economy.

Our Services

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Training Program

Bullying and Harassment Prevention: An EOWA on-line program is a new training program developed by EOWA to help educate organisations and their employees about appropriate behaviour at work. For more information, contact the Education Officer on (02) 9448 8500 or email: eowa@eowa.gov.au.

Workshops

EOWA runs a series of tailor-made workshops throughout the year. Workshop topics include:

- How to develop a workplace program and prepare a compliant report
- How to position your organisation for Waiving, EOWA Employer of Choice for Women and the EOWA Business Achievement Awards

Research and Publications

Each year, EOWA carries out research around the various barriers women encounter in the workplace, and the benefits to employers in implementing innovative policies to address them. A key EOWA research initiative has been the Australian Census of Women in Leadership, which measures the exact status of women in executive management and on the boards of Australia's ASX200. In January 2008, EOWA also released the first Top Earner Report which, using data from the 2006 Census, examined the remuneration of the most highly paid executives in the ASX200 and exposed significant salary gaps between men and women at that most senior level.

EOWA's recent research publication, *Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain* revealed the perceptions and attitudes of women and men in the Australian labour force toward their careers and workplaces. The report outlined the factors women and men consider most important when choosing and employer and identified the issues that motivate them to move on.

Our quarterly electronic newsletter, *News Alert*, includes the latest information on equal opportunity and leading EO practices, and is distributed to a growing subscriber base including employers, HR personnel, academics, students, state and federal government employees and the general public.

All EOWA research and publications are available via our website. Those who wish to subscribe to *News Alert* may do so by emailing: eowa@eowa.gov.au.

EOWA Website

EOWA's website offers an extensive range of online tools and practical resources, including leading organisations' policies, practices and case studies, provided to assist employers to enhance the development of successful EO workplace programs.

Contact Us

For further details on EOWA's services, please visit our website: www.eowa.gov.au or contact our office on (02) 9448 8500.

For more information on this survey publication, please contact the EOWA Research Officer on (02) 9448 8542 or email: eowa@eowa.gov.au.



eowa.gov.au

