



THE SENATE  
SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE

**Inquiry into the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**  
**Public Hearing –Monday 29 October 2018**  
**Questions Taken on Notice**  
**Cardno International**

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**1 HANSARD, p. 45**

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**Senator LINES:** Presuming your website's up to date, that's what it's telling me. I want you to comment on the fact that your organisation, at its leadership level, is not anywhere remotely near fifty-fifty.

**Ms Alford:** Certainly at my level it is close to that.

**Senator LINES:** Yes, but I'm looking at the board, your technical leaders and your senior principals.

**Ms Alford:** Yes, but certainly our part of the business, international development, is headed by a woman. Then there are other parts of the business—engineering and professional services. There are several initiatives in place to continue to build the leadership capabilities of the women within Cardno.

**Senator LINES:** Can you take it on notice and give us a snapshot of your leadership and board and where the women are and what your objectives are in putting more women in leadership.

**Ms Alford:** Yes.

## Cardno's Response to Question on Notice

Response to Question on Notice by Senator Lines, Senate, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Monday 29 October 2018

Cardno is committed to gender diversity and gender equality in the workplace. We are also committed to gender diversity in the programs we manage and recognise that inclusive development is critical to delivering and achieving SDGs.

The Cardno website has only recently been updated and upon review, we acknowledge that the leadership profiles do not accurately reflect the gender composition of Cardno senior management, nor highlight the diversity within our international development division. We are taking steps to address this on our website.

Forty-two per cent of the key management team that report to Cardno's CEO are women, including the head of our international development division. Within our international development division, in addition to our female division manager, the 25-person global executive and senior leadership team includes 15 women, 17 of 27 principals are women, and two of our six senior principals are women. It is also worth noting that a new intake for principals is currently occurring and we are encouraging even more women to apply.

However, we recognise that there is always room for improvement, both within our business and more broadly to meet challenges in the domestic engineering sector; the current Australian engineering workforce consists of 88 per cent men, and 84 per cent of engineering graduates are men.<sup>1</sup> To improve gender diversity, Cardno has policies to attract and retain women. These include a progressive [Parental Leave Policy](#) and [Domestic & Family Violence Policy](#) offering paid leave for cases of domestic and family violence, flexible workplace policies, telecommuting provisions, and training and professional development policies which encourage women's participation. Recruitment and promotions are underpinned by policies which seek to address unconscious bias in recruitment and performance reviews, and our global corporate policy is to identify and close the gender pay gap.

In addition, our [Women in Cardno](#) initiative supports emerging female leaders across the business. It is an employee-led gender equality program aiming to drive change in our business and beyond. Women in Cardno communicates regularly with staff, promotes gender equality research and campaigns, and reports progress against five key goals that aim to: (1) reduce the gender pay gap; (2) facilitate networking; (3) promote the Women in Cardno program; (4) normalise work flexibility; and (5) address unconscious bias. Cardno is also part of Consult Australia's Male Champions of Change initiative, which works to advance equality across businesses and to act as advocates for the consulting industry.

We agree that our website needs to better reflect who we really are and, as a business, we continue to work hard to ensure we better reflect the communities in which we live and work, including improving both the representation and genuine participation of women in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> [Women in Engineering](#) report, Monash Industry Team Initiative 2017