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The Secretary
Standing Committee on Employment and Workplace Relations
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam,

Pay equity and associated issues related to increasing female participation in the workforce

On behalf of Jones Lang LaSalle (Australia), thank you for the opportunity to provide insight and respond on this matter.

With specific regard to the Terms of Reference, our views are expressed below:

1. The adequacy of current data to reliably monitor employment changes that may impact on pay equity issues;

Our view is that data readily exists across all organisations and within government. However, it is the collation and analysis of such data to create awareness and translating the data into action that requires greater focus.

At Jones Lang LaSalle we have adopted the use of 'The CEO Kit' – developed by Chief Executive Women (CEW). The CEO Kit is targeted at CEO's to assist in recognising the scarcity of talent and the need to leverage previously untapped talent pools as a serious business issue.

With a focus on the issue of retention of female workers, the CEO Kit uses an analytic and fact-based approach to probe under the surface of specific issues affecting the participation of women in the workforce. One of the five core questions is "*Does our pay distribution by gender tell a story?*", thus bringing the issue of pay equity to the forefront.

Supported by practical examples and academic research the CEO Kit guides organisations in diagnosing issues in their own business and to develop solutions to address disproportional treatment of women across a number of employment matters.

This is a valuable tool and is one that should be more broadly adopted, and in doing so, would establish a base for ongoing (public) benchmarking. We believe the issue is not about more data, it's about effectively using the 'real' data that already exists.

2. The need for education and information among employers, employees and trade unions in relation to pay equity issues;

The historic trend of women taking the child-caring responsibilities has meant they have spent less time in paid employment and are now not represented at the higher levels in the workforce. We are now seeing the trend towards a greater participation of women in higher education, and subsequently entering into 'non-traditional' occupations and industries in greater numbers than they previously have. This changing trend has contributed to the pay equity issues we see today.

From our own company perspective, property has historically been a non-traditional industry for women. Consequently the representation of women at senior levels is less than optimal and continues to be a challenge. Coupled with a general lack of women in the property industry, this exacerbates the pay equity issue as male employees continue to dominate the more senior and/or more highly paid roles.

More important than education is equipping organisations to translate their own facts into action, reinforcing and contextualising this as a real issue and one that is not going to go away.

The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) does an excellent job at holding organisations accountable for monitoring employment issues affecting women's participation in the workforce. We believe the role EOWA plays could be stronger with more specific criteria around pay equity upon which organisations are required to report. This would contribute to a more robust benchmarking base, and also demonstrate a translation of education into action.

3. Current structural arrangements in the negotiation of wages that may impact disproportionately on women;

No comment.

4. The adequacy of recent and current equal remuneration provisions in state and federal workplace relations legislation;

No comment.

5. The adequacy of current arrangements to ensure fair access to training and promotion for women who have taken maternity leave and/or returned to work part time and/or sought flexible work hours;

At Jones Lang LaSalle the opportunity for training, development, promotion and remuneration review, reward and recognition is based on merit, and thus is open to all employees regardless of gender, employment status, age, etc.

The role played by EOWA encourages organisations to examine their internal practices to ensure discriminatory practices do not exist. Again, the role of EOWA could be enhanced and focus on the communication of trends across organisations. We do not advocate the notion of quotas, but publication of data would encourage organisations to more deeply consider (and be accountable for) issues of equity and merit.

6. The need for further legislative reform to address pay equity in Australia.

We do not believe that further/additional legislation is required to address the issue of pay equity. It is not the role of government and creating bureaucracy will not change behaviour or drive the paradigm shifts required. Unless CEOs and leadership teams drive programs to encourage and reinforce the participation of women in the workforce because they see it as an important business issue, the desired changes will not happen. For this reason our position is firmly around awareness, accountability and action, as stated above.

We believe there is potentially a role that Boards can play in more firmly positioning this as a business matter. Holding the CEO and leadership team more accountable for the facts and progress within their own organisation places a greater importance on this issue and will start to drive shifts across the critical mass in Australian business. By positioning this as 'good business/governance practice', organisations will 'want to' adopt actions to address this issue rather than feel they 'have to' – we believe this distinction to be important.

At Jones Lang LaSalle we acknowledge that the 'war for talent' is real, with specific skill shortages posing a challenge for our business, as it is for many organisations. Women remain underutilised in the workforce and in what has been a non-traditional industry for women, we see women as a source of untapped talent for our business. The issue of pay equity is real and a key factor influencing women's participation in the workforce as a whole. Addressing this issue is a journey that can be facilitated with greater awareness, analysis, education and benchmarking.

Yours sincerely,



CHRISTINE BARTLETT
Chief Executive Officer
Jones Lang LaSalle Australia Pty Limited