

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

6.13 The committee recommends that the Office for Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet lead the development and implementation of a national policy framework to achieve gender pay equity in Australia. The framework should set a pay equity target date, provide an advisory structure to guide implementation, provide a roadmap for achieving pay equity in Australia, address segregation in Australian workplaces, and draw on measures in Australia's public and private sectors and in comparable overseas jurisdictions.

6.14 The national policy framework to achieve pay equity should coordinate efforts across agencies of government to address the factors that adversely affect women's workforce participation and gender segregation, including:

- reforms to flexible work provisions that will increase access for men and women, and make provision for employees to appeal decisions;
- an extension to the period of PPL and new provisions for the payment of superannuation guarantee during PPL;
- improved access to affordable high quality early childhood education and care; and
- recognition of career paths and qualifications for feminised industries, particularly the care industry.

Recommendation 2

6.23 The committee recommends that the *Fair Work Act 2009* be amended to improve its capacity to address equal remuneration, including:

- introducing gender pay equity as an overall object of the Act; and
- the provision of guidance for both the Commission and applicant parties on making and applying for orders of equal remuneration. Such guidance could draw on Principles previously adopted in NSW and Queensland jurisdictions, including:
 - requiring that consideration of orders make reference to historical and contemporary gender-based undervaluation;
 - suggesting the steps required by applicants to demonstrate that undervaluation was gendered or had a gender-associated cause; and
 - clarifying that applications may be made without the need for a direct male comparator to establish undervaluation;
- clarifying that applications may be made for equal remuneration orders and work value claims simultaneously; and

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- clarifying the definition of remuneration to include recompense or reward for services rendered, including non-cash benefits.

Recommendation 3

6.24 The committee further recommends government conduct a comprehensive consultation process with expert stakeholders to achieve these reforms and define any others needed to the Act to achieve pay equity for Australian women.

Recommendation 4

6.28 The Pay Equity Unit (PEU) was established as part of the Fair Work Commission to undertake pay equity related research and provide information to inform matters relating to pay equity. The committee recommends that the government:

- restore and protect the budget of the PEU;
- investigate the provision of enhanced advisory functions for the PEU via an expert Pay Equity Panel, to undertake research into pay equity matters and provide recommendations for consideration by a Full Bench of the Fair Work Commission; and
- conduct a review of alternative means of making equal remuneration orders, such as conciliation via the Pay Equity Panel, with a view to achieving more timely resolution of equal remuneration applications.

Recommendation 5

6.32 The committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training update the National Career Development Strategy and the Australian Blueprint for Career Development to address the need for gender sensitive career guidance and counselling in all Australian schools and training institutions. The strategy should:

- recognise that women and men may respond differently to information about occupations, industries and further education;
- provide mixed gender career role models, mentors and experiences, with particular sensitivity to addressing gender segregation; and
- offer guidelines for qualifications and continuing professional development (CPD) for career guidance professionals.

Recommendation 6

6.33 The committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training undertake a national evaluation of all programs and initiatives associated with increasing numbers of girls in STEM education, to provide benchmark data and best practice guidelines.

Recommendation 7

6.38 The committee recommends that the government conduct a review of the recent initiative in the United Kingdom on Gender Pay Gap Reporting within two years of the program's implementation.

Recommendation 8

6.39 The committee recommends that the government conduct a review of labour force data with particular attention to job classifications used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the integration of other available datasets. This review should engage businesses, WGEA, unions and academics.

Recommendation 9

6.40 The committee recommends that the ABS Time Use study recommence on a regular basis.

