

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Additional Budget Estimates 2000-2001, 19-23 February 2001



Question: PM35

Outcome 1, Output 2.2

Topic: OSW Workplan

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: F&PA 80

Senator Crowley asked: Provide a copy of new OSW workplan when available.

Answer: A copy of the new OSW Strategic Plan is at attached.



PM. 35
Add. Est 200

Working for Women

OFFICE OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2001-2003



Office of the Status of Women Strategic Directions 2001-2003

Commonwealth of Australia 2001

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new strategic directions for OSW



For more than 26 years the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women (OSW), as it is now known, has been working in partnership with governments, organisations, communities, and individuals to improve the position, participation and circumstances of Australian women.

Government support is available for families, working women and carers and there is a range of measures that support financial security for all women.

Now, more women than ever before are studying at university and the gap between men's and women's earnings is closing. More women are working than ever before, child care is more accessible and more affordable and there are health services specifically for women.

But there is more we need to see happen.

We must see more women in leadership positions, more women on boards, more women heading community organisations, more women appropriately recognised for their contributions to our society. We need to fight violence against women and girls. And we need to continue to work on improving women's financial position.

Most importantly, we must ensure that the diversity of Australian women and their life choices are celebrated – by challenging and breaking stereotypes.

The strategic plan of the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women addresses these crucial areas in continuing to strengthen the work of the Office and to meet future challenges. The OSW strategic plan to the year 2003:

- **builds** upon the substantial advances toward equality women have made throughout the last century;
- **celebrates** and respects the choices, contributions and diversity of Australian women;
- **recognises** that despite these advances there are still barriers to women participating fully and equally in society;
- **identifies** strategies to meet the moral and ethical imperative to improve the status of and opportunities for women and contribute to improving the lives of women all around the world.

This plan provides a sound framework for OSW to strengthen partnerships between government, the professions and industry and women's sector groups.

New strategic directions for OSW (cont.)

OSW is a government policy advisory unit. Our central task is to inform policy. This plan gives us positive direction as we move to consolidate our role as a knowledge-based organisation.

The strategies are founded on the goal of mainstreaming women's issues. This means working to ensure that a focus on women's experiences, issues or perspectives becomes everyone's business, and that attention to the effect of new policies or new services on women and their circumstances will become routine.

Mainstreaming means systematic processes to ensure that all policies, services and initiatives are evaluated for the benefits they will provide to women, their impact on women and their accessibility by women.

Addressing the different circumstances and needs men and women, girls and boys should become routine essential questions.

As we move through the three-year plan, OSW will be working toward the day when gender inclusion becomes the focus and the standard for policy makers and service providers.



Rosemary Calder
First Assistant Secretary
Office of the Status of Women

OSW vision

Equality for women in every aspect of their lives and respect for and value of the choices, contributions and diversity of women.

OSW mission

To be the respected authority and leader in policy and service development for women.

OSW goals

- economic self-sufficiency and security for women throughout their lives
- optimal status and position for women
- the elimination of violence in the lives of women
- the maintenance of optimal health and wellbeing throughout women's lives.

economic self-sufficiency and s

OSW's key objectives are to:

- maximise the opportunities for women's economic development and security over the lifecycle; and
- identify and address the issues that impact adversely on women's economic security.

curity for women throughout their lives



To work towards these objectives, OSW will:

- develop a strategy on savings across the lifecycle to promote adequate retirement incomes for women;
- identify emerging issues, inform policy agenda-setting, produce publications to inform policy development, and examine the establishment of a research group;
- promote the inclusion of gender equity benchmarks in relevant policies and programmes throughout the Commonwealth Government; and
- encourage portfolios to include gender equity performance indicators in future policies.

Economic self-sufficiency and security for women depends upon access to jobs, training and education, child care, equal pay, fair division of family responsibilities and adequate superannuation and income security.

A workforce that makes the most of its people and does not discriminate on the grounds of sex is essential for a well functioning economy.

Economic security is essential to providing women with the ability to make choices about how they want to live their lives.

WHERE ARE WOMEN NOW?

- More women are in paid work than ever before.¹
- **While the gap is closing, there is still disparity between rates of pay for men and women.** In the August quarter 2000:
 - women earned 84% of men's full-time average ordinary time earnings (Average gross, before-tax earnings of full-time employees, not including earnings for overtime).²
 - when overtime is included, women earned just over 81% of men's full-time average total earnings.³
 - when all workers (including part-time workers) are included, women earned around 67% of men's total earnings.⁴
- **Men are significantly more likely than women to be employed.** In December 2000:
 - there were over a million more men than women in paid work – more than five million men and almost four million women.⁵
 - 65.5% of women and 82.6% of men aged 15–64 were working or looking for work.⁵
 - In 1999, women students made up 58% of students commencing undergraduate degrees at university and 52% in post-graduate studies.⁷

optimal status and position for

OSW's key objectives are to create a policy and social environment to:

- optimise the status of Australian women in all walks of life;
- support women's opportunities to make real choices in their lives and to be respected in making those choices;
- remove stereotypes and assumptions about women; and
- encourage women to assume leadership positions in critical numbers.

r women



To work towards these objectives, OSW will, through consultation, partnerships and cooperative projects:

- establish and promote a comprehensive vision of women as leaders;
- promote changed values and perceptions so women are recognised and valued in all their life choices;
- work to engage the media in portraying and promoting positive images of women; and
- evaluate the impact of targeted government programmes on women's status and development.

Women must have the right to participate in decision-making processes that shape their lives, and those of their families, community and nation.

Unless women are active participants in all spheres of public and private life, Australia's future will not reflect the talents, experience and aspirations of all citizens.

To achieve optimal status, assumptions about women need to be challenged and women actively encouraged and supported in taking up leadership roles and positions.

WHERE ARE WOMEN NOW?

- Women hold 32.2% of Commonwealth Board positions -- of those positions under total Commonwealth control.⁹
- In 2000, women occupied 29% of government board positions across all States and Territories.⁹
- 10% of private sector board members are women.¹⁰
- The proportion of women executive directors has increased to 2.9% in 1999 from 1.3% in 1998.¹¹
- 25.1% of Commonwealth parliamentarians are women, almost double the international average of 13.8%.¹²
- 34% of Australia's 1.3 million small business operators are women.¹³

elimination of violence in the

OSW's key objectives are to:

- work towards a society where women's lives are free from violence and the threat of violence, and their safety and wellbeing is secured; and
- position Australia as an international leader in reducing violence against women.

es of women



To work towards these objectives, OSW will:

- promote policies and practices that address prevention, early intervention and crisis assistance;
- promote incorporation of demonstrated good practice at national, State, Territory and local levels;
- facilitate the development of appropriate and comprehensive community responses;
- raise community awareness to reduce tolerance of violent behaviours and to reduce the use of violence;
- implement complementary strategies for men and boys and women and girls, to prevent family violence and reduce the use of violence in the community; and
- promote programmes and policies for women's security and health – addressing the needs of women affected by violence, including recovery and wellbeing.

Violence against women and girls is a fundamental violation of human rights. The threat of violence too is a violation of fundamental rights.

Both are also forms of discrimination that prevent women from achieving full social and economic equality.

Violence is never a legitimate way of resolving family conflict. Australian women who live with violence must be able to break their silence; must know that they can break their silence.

And, while men are more likely to be the victims and perpetrators of violence, young women are most at risk of being the victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. These crimes have traumatic personal consequences for women and girls and their families. The social cost is felt throughout society.

The Commonwealth, States and Territories collaboration, Partnerships Against Domestic Violence, is making significant progress in testing innovative preventative measures and best practice to prevent and address domestic violence.

elimination of violence in the lives of women (cont.)

WHERE ARE WOMEN NOW?

- 38% of women had experienced one or more incidents of violence since the age of 15. Of the women who had experienced physical violence, one third had experienced more than one incident. Of those who experienced sexual violence, 45% had experienced more than one incident.
 - Women are four times as likely to experience violence by a man than by a woman.
 - Younger women are more at risk of violence than older women.
 - In the 12 months prior to the survey, 133,100 women experienced an incident of sexual assault. 22% of these women were physically injured in the last incident. 15% reported the incident to the police.
 - In contrast to physical violence, more women experienced sexual violence from someone other than their partner.
 - 23% of women who had ever been married or in de facto relationships had experienced violence from a male partner at some time during the relationship
 - 42% of the women who were pregnant at some time during their relationships with a previous partner experienced violence during the pregnancy and 20% experienced violence for the first time while they were pregnant.
 - 46% of women with children in their care who had experienced violence from a previous partner said they had children who had witnessed the violence.
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- A small minority of women subjected to violence use crisis services or contact police. 4.5% of women who were physically assaulted by a man contacted a crisis service, as did 8% of women who were sexually assaulted by a man. 20% of women who had ever experienced physical assault reported the last incident to the police, as did 10% of women who were ever sexually assaulted.
 - Of the women who had experienced violence from a partner in the past 20 years, 80% had not sought help from services at all. Just 5% experiencing violence from a current partner reported the last incident to the police.
 - 73% of women who experience violence often from a current male partner live in fear.¹⁴
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maintenance of optimal health

OSW's key objectives are to create a policy and social environment to:

- respect and value women's needs and diversity at all stages of the lifecycle;
- enable all women, as individuals, to make the choices that sustain their health and wellbeing; and
- enhance the Government's commitment to gender mainstreaming to ensure that women's health and wellbeing across the lifecycle is routinely considered in developing relevant policy directions.

and wellbeing throughout women's lives



To work towards these objectives, OSW will:

- contribute to developing a policy agenda for women that sustains their health and wellbeing across the lifecycle;
- form and sustain collaborative working relationships to achieve gender mainstreaming in policy development across government;
- facilitate appropriate research and the brokering of effective partnerships between women's organisations, OSW and departments, as well as research bodies to ensure that key issues such as body image and the role of housing in health and wellbeing are considered.

Health is a major factor in determining a person's standard of living and the ability to realise their full potential during all life stages.

Australia has a high-quality health care system and high living standards, resulting in long life expectancy.

A person's health and wellbeing however, is determined not only through access to health care services, but also through access to information, community and family support services, housing, employment, a healthy environment, sport and recreation, and a society free from violence.

WHERE ARE WOMEN NOW?

- Women tend to live longer than men – 70% of those aged 85 years and over are women. Women however, have higher levels of disability than men, particularly at more advanced ages.¹⁵
- More females than males experience depression over their lifetime – particularly between 18 and 34 years and 55+ years.¹⁶
- In 1998, the four major causes of death for women in Australia were heart disease, stroke, dementia (and related disorders) and breast cancer.¹⁷
- Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer related death among Australian women.¹⁸

corporate leadership

To become the respected authority and leader in policy and service development for women, OSW's goals are to:

- position itself as the recognised and valued leader and expert on issues affecting women;
- influence policy agenda setting and policy development across the Commonwealth Government and promote integration of women's policy into mainstream policy development, practices and programmes;
- proactively monitor service provision and policy outcomes for women;
- research key areas and issues concerning women;
- network extensively with women, community organisations, interested individuals and other key stakeholders; and
- represent Australia's progress internationally and contribute to international progress for women.

OSW works nationally and internationally to promote and advance the status of women and the achievement of the four OSW policy goals for women.

To work towards achieving these goals, OSW will:

- provide gender expertise and specialist policy analysis and advice on appropriate and effective treatment of women by the law and the legal system, and access to the legal system;
- contribute to strategies, nationally and internationally, that promote gender equality for women and enhance women's economic status, position in society and health and wellbeing; and enable women to live in non-violent families and communities;
- actively participate in national and international forums on the status of women and report on Australia's international obligations to eliminate discrimination against women;
- promote and participate in activities and strategies that increase women's representation in international decision-making forums and strengthen women's participation in economic activities;
- develop a community information strategy to improve access to government information for women, including public awareness activities, a publications programme and an updated website;
- consult with women on their information needs;
- facilitate effective collaboration between the Commonwealth and States and Territories in national initiatives for women; and
- maintain effective consultation and interactive relationships with women throughout Australia.

OSW'S VISUAL IDENTITY

Corporate visual identity should graphically represent the organisation's role.

To better explain OSW to its audiences and capture the new directions of the Office, OSW has established a new logo.

The logo reflects OSW's role in representing the diversity of needs and views of Australian women. The ribbon-like letters of O and S weave through the three sections of the W depicting OSW's interaction, consultation and partnership development with community and government sectors and with women in all walks of life.

ATTRIBUTIONS

- 1 *Monthly Labour Force Surveys*, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1966-2001)
- 2 *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia*, ABS, August 2000
- 3 *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia*, ABS, August 2000
- 4 *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia*, ABS, August 2000
- 5 *Labour Force Australia*, ABS, December 2000
- 6 Unpublished data from *Monthly Labour Force Surveys*, ABS, 1972-2000
- 7 *Students 1999: Selected Higher Education Statistics*, Department of Education Training and Youth
- 8 *Appoint*, OSW, June 2000
- 9 OSW, 2000
- 10 *Boards of Directors Study in Australia and New Zealand*, Korn and Ferry International, 2000
- 11 Korn and Ferry International, 2000
- 12 Parliament of Australia website, www.aph.gov.au, 2000
- 13 *Characteristics of Small Business, Australia*, ABS, 1999
- 14 *Women's Safety Australia*, ABS, 1996
- 15 *Women's Health*, ABS, 1994
- 16 *Understanding Depression*, Evans, Burrows and Norman, 2000
- 17 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, National Mortality Database, Australia's Health, 2000
- 18 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australia's Health, 2000

airs, 1999

For more information

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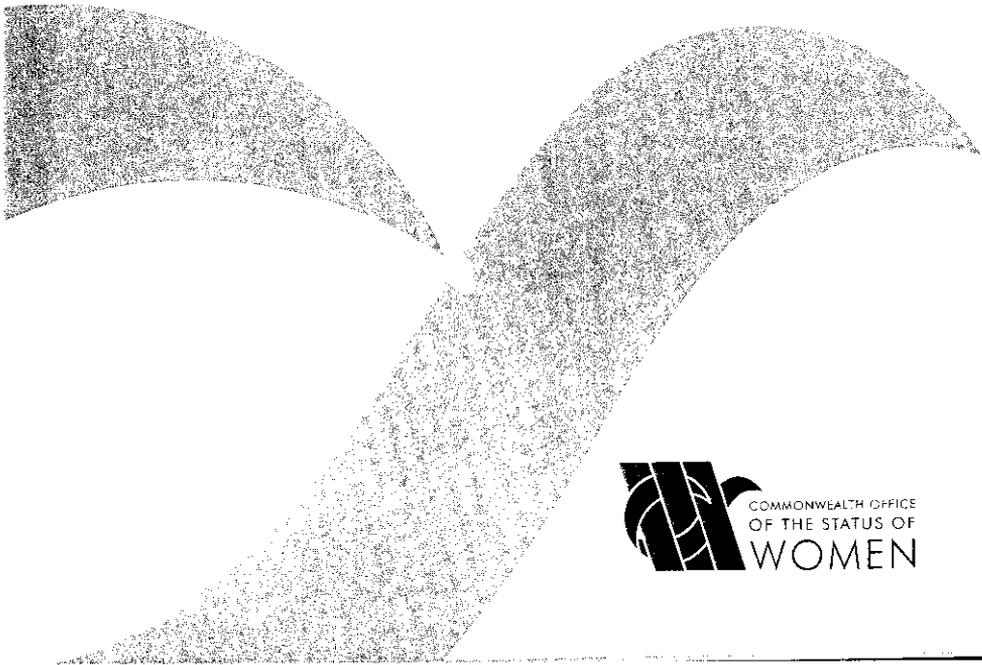
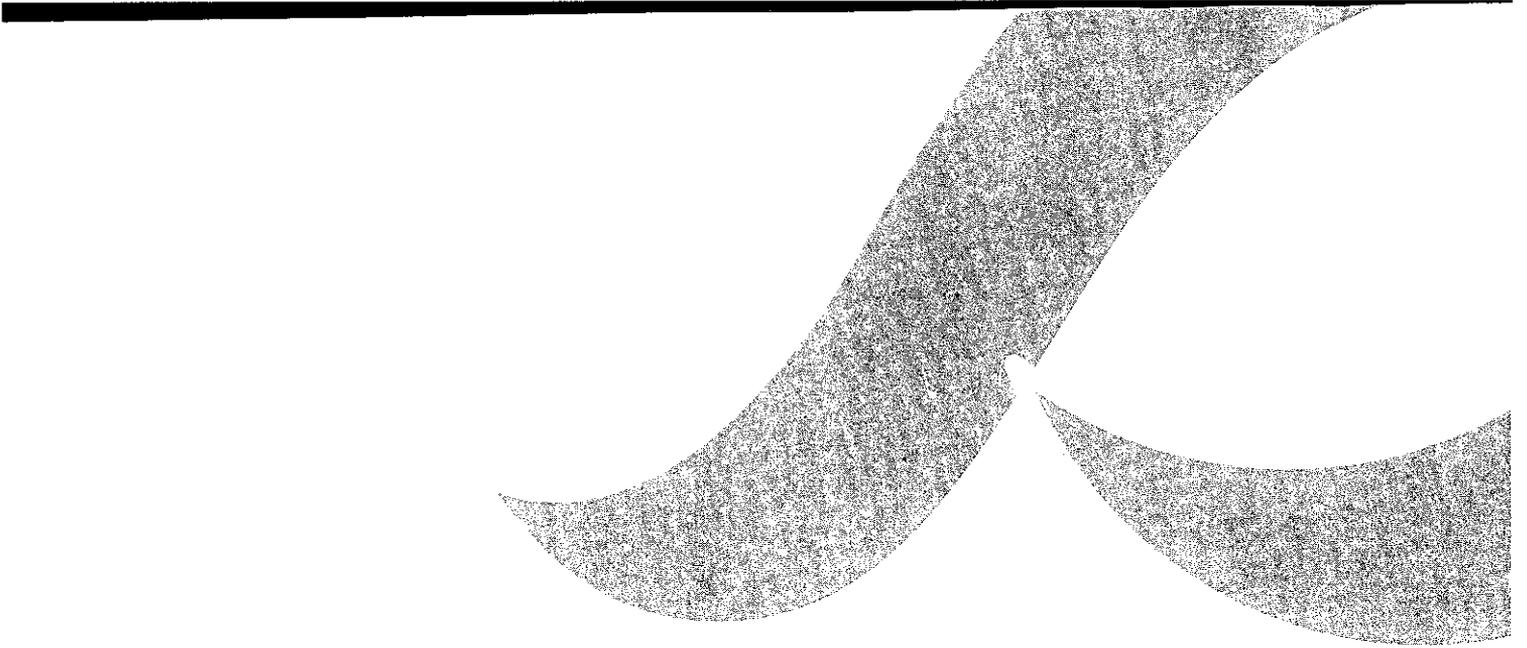
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The Partnerships Against Domestic Violence
also has a website. All of the programme's
are available on this site.

WWW: <http://www.padv.dpmc.gov.au>



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OF THE STATUS OF
WOMEN