



PEOPLE PLACE PROSPERITY **SD05**

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Gender diversity in the minerals
industry





" I have a son and a daughter who have recently entered the workforce and, like any parent, my aspirations are that they be allowed to reach their full potential in a work environment that rewards merit "

Wayne Osborne, Managing Director
Alcoa World Alumina Australia





The business case for diversity

- > Human resources management
- > Knowledge creation
- > Globalisation of business
- > Sales and marketing
- > Reduced safety and health risks
- > Legal compliance and a reduced exposure to litigation
- > Workplace culture
- > Social licence to operate





Women in the Australian minerals industry

- > Women comprise 18% of minerals industry workforce (both sites and corporate) compared to a national participation rate of 45%.
- > Women represent 3% of all employees at mine sites and minerals processing operations
- > Indigenous women represent 12% of all Indigenous employees





So what is the appropriate target?

- > Academics suggest 15% is the level at which minority groups start to effect change on the dominant culture
- > Critical acts may be more important than critical mass
- > Relies on employers determining appropriate diversity targets and strategies to achieve the objectives outlined in their internal business case





Barriers to female participation

- > The high full time employment rate in the industry (83%) may be a key barrier to women's participation - 40% of female employment nationally is part-time
- > Women who work in the industry are a much younger cohort than the cohort of men - may be the result of lack of part time work and flexible work arrangements for parenting
- > It is difficult to both attract and retain women in the minerals industry - may be a product of workplace culture and hours of work





Industry strategies for diversity

- > Establishment of MCA Women and Mining Dialogue
- > Focus is on developing strategies to improve performance in effectively engaging and maximising opportunities for women – both in our workforce and in the communities in which we operate.
- > Recognises the differing needs of women, including Indigenous women, women from cultures that have been historically disadvantaged, or older women.





Corporate strategies for diversity

- > Develop policies and practices to eliminate discriminatory behaviours and create workplaces free from harassment
- > Recognise the costs of losing highly skilled and experienced staff, and capitalise on the benefits of workplace diversity
- > Provide visible leadership to achieve cultural change by making women's professional issues part of mainstream procedures and processes





- > Gender equality must become an organisational function as regular as budgeting and annual reporting, and be included in performance review and reward processes.





" These women did not want to stand out as being different, and nor should they have had to. It was my behaviour that had to change. I really believe now that, as a leader, you have an obligation to create a working environment that recognises and is inclusive of a diverse workforce..."

Wayne Osborne, Managing Director
Alcoa World Alumina Australia

