



Minerals Week 07

positioning australia in a supercycle of change

Minerals Week 29 May – 1 June 2007
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

www.minerals.org.au/mw07



Women and Mining: Why Does it Matter?

Christine Charles
Newmont
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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**



Industry Drivers

- ❑ Booming Industry
- ❑ Competitive Labour Market
- ❑ Globalisation
- ❑ Operating in a diverse world
- ❑ Difference as a competitive advantage
- ❑ Social Licence to Operate



The business case for diversity

- ❑ Attracting and Keeping staff
- ❑ Knowledge creation
- ❑ Reputation
- ❑ Reduced safety and health risks
- ❑ Legal compliance
- ❑ A reduced exposure to litigation
- ❑ Workplace culture



An Industry Response

As a highly gender segregated industry, the Australian minerals industry recognised the need to look closely at those features of the industry that disadvantage women employees and identify areas where the industry needs to adjust its structures and culture to attract and retain high-quality and skilled women in our current and future workforce.



Minerals Council of Australia

- ❑ The Board of the MCA supported the establishment of the Women and Mining Dialogue
- ❑ A Steering Committee was established and first meet in July 2004 with a broad range of perspectives represented.
- ❑ At the first meeting the group described the objective of the dialogue as:
 - to assisting the Council to develop practical strategies to increase the effective participation and contribution of women in, and their engagement with, the minerals industry and its communities.



Women and Mining

The MCA supported the Steering Committee's desire to broaden the focus from women in the workforce to a broader approach to address women's issues in the communities in which we operate. Women are a diverse group and no single approach will address the differing needs of women, including Indigenous women, women from cultures that have been historically disadvantaged, or older women.



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Members of the Steering Committee

☐ Christine Charles (Chair): Newmont Mining Corporation

☐ Fran Burgess: Zinifex Rosebery Mine

☐ Cath Bowtell: Australian Council of Trade Unions

☐ Pru Goward: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

☐ Rocky Clifford: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

☐ Bruce Harvey: Rio Tinto Ltd

☐ Mitchell H. Hooke: Minerals Council of Australia

☐ Ros Kelly: MCA External SD Advisory Group

☐ Marcia Langton: University of Melbourne

☐ Scott Jones, Newcrest mining Ltd

☐ Brian Phillips, Leviathon Resources

☐ Sue Border: AusIMM Women in Mining Network

☐ Geraldine McGuire: Sustainable Solutions

☐ Melissa Stutsel: Australian Government Office for Women

☐ Kerry Flanagan: Australian Government Office for Women

☐ Lee Emerson, Australian Government Office for Women

☐ Melanie Stutsel: Minerals Council of Australia (Secretariat)



Establishing A Better Understanding

- ❑ The Steering Committee reviewed available information and identified the need for both better baseline information and better analysis. The decision was made to start with women in mining.
- ❑ A research program was developed that has resulted in the reports to be launched later today
- ❑ This was progressed through partnership between the Australian Government Office for Women and the Minerals Council of Australia
- ❑ The research was undertaken by the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRSM) and Women in Social and Economic Research (WiSER).



Unearthing New Resources: Attracting and Retaining Women in the Australian Minerals Industry.

- ❑ ***Female Mining Engineers and Minerals Processing Students: Career Motivations, Expectations and Perceptions, by the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRSM), University of Queensland.***
- ❑ ***Retention of Women in the Minerals Industry, by CSRSM***
- ❑ ***Young Women, Career Expectations & the Minerals Industry by the Women in Social and Economic Research at the Curtin University of Technology***



Key structural issues

- ❑ The low level of part time work in the minerals industry compared to other sectors, including other traditionally male oriented industries is an obvious impediment in that 40% of female employment nationally is part time;
- ❑ The industry's culture of overwork, long hours and intensity has had a more negative impact on women than men because of their additional caring responsibilities; and
- ❑ The remote nature of the industry inhibiting female participation in the industry, though this is much less so in regard to the engagement of Indigenous women.



Cultural Impediments

- ❑ A lack of mentor relationships and support networks,
- ❑ gender segregated nature of decision-making and task allocation,
- ❑ disadvantage,
- ❑ discrimination or harassment
- ❑ Maleness of the culture



Summary of Recommendations



Industry Leadership

That the minerals industry demonstrate stronger leadership regarding women's participation in the minerals industry.

- Gender considerations should become a mainstream focus ;
- Consideration could be given to hosting a conference of HR personnel to address the issue of workplace diversity, and to showcase leading practice;
- Stronger industry leadership is demonstrated both vertically (industry) and horizontally (within companies); and
- Within companies, both at corporate and site level, senior management should lead by example.



Attraction Strategies

- ❑ The provision of information:
 - professional opportunities that are available
 - the demographic profile of the sector (to show that it is a place for young people)
 - the career opportunities that the sector offers
- ❑ Marketing and networking to promote gender equity and flexible work strategies
- ❑ A network structure for female students at tertiary and secondary levels to facilitate their exposure to positive female role models and industry success stories.
- ❑ A comprehensive university based program be established.



Recruitment Strategies

- Review recruitment strategies with the aim to increase the number of women applicants.
- Targeting university undergraduates across a range of relevant discipline areas
 - Vacation employment to women;
 - Advertising campaigns and media;
 - Using images and language that are inclusive;
 - Head hunting' senior women;
 - Aim at the same number of female and male applicants for vacant positions;
 - Providing a range of scholarships for women;
 - Workplace policies, systems and processes



Systems and Information

- ❑ Decisive action is taken at the operational level to implement systems and process improvements that directly address identified gaps in workforce management in respect to gender diversity.
- ❑ Implement a continuous improvement plan for management systems and processes relating to the attraction and retention of women.



Indigenous Women

Implement 'special measures' to assist in the attraction and retention of Indigenous women.

- Working towards employing a 'critical mass' of Indigenous women;
- The appointment of a dedicated female contact officer to provide support to deal with complex home and life skills issues;
- Reviewing cross-cultural awareness training to ensure employment-related aspects are addressed, in addition to important historical and broader cultural aspects.



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Working arrangements

Identify the structural changes to improve work practices in relation to flexibility.

- Providing the opportunity to attend significant family or personal events as a means of maintaining important relationships;
- Providing the opportunity for couples to be on the same roster pattern;
- Developing and implementing protocols that to keep women connected with the organisation during parental leave;
- Providing a range of graduated return to work options for women;



Working arrangements (cont)

- Providing ‘refresher’ training for women who have been on parental leave;
- Reviewing structural impediments to the offering of part-time work in professional areas;
- Reviewing opportunities for telecommuting;
- Ensuring that promotional opportunities are available for part-time employees; and
- Encouraging male employees to consider part-time options so that part-time positions do not become ‘ghetto positions’.



Improved Work Environments

Improvements in the Work Environment

- Provision of partner accommodation in fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) operations;
- Medical/emergency coverage for FIFO families at home;
- Quality of services in remote residential locations, particularly health and education.
- On-site facilities and accommodation is well maintained and is gender appropriate
- Adequate levels of security at on-site facilities;
- Enhanced communication technology, (mobile phones, web-based, video conferencing etc);
- Activities on-site that are inclusive.



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Workplace Culture

Address the strong masculine culture.

- ❑ **Leadership training for senior managers, managers and supervisors;**
- ❑ **Senior managers, managers and supervisors to be held accountable for improvements in organisational culture;**
- ❑ **Working to eliminating tolerance of discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace;**
- ❑ **Reward structures that promote inclusive behaviour at all levels of the organisation;**



Workplace Culture (cont)

- ❑ Safe reporting of sexual harassment/harassment and personal safety issues;
- ❑ Understanding and addressing reasons why women are reluctant to formalise complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment;
- ❑ Investigating why so many supervisors and managers resist flexible work options;
- ❑ Consulting women on issues that affect them; and
- ❑ Implementing practical changes to address the ‘maleness’ of the workplace.



Life Work Balance

- Develop a plan that supports all employees to achieve a balance between work, family and life commitments
- Promoting an organisational culture that encourages and supports family friendly work practices;
 - Providing information and support for employees to help them understand their options and the resources available;
 - Supporting the development and implementation of family friendly work practices and services; and
 - Improving attraction and retention of employees with family responsibilities.



Career Management

Stronger career planning strategies to assist women (and men) incorporate family-related career interruptions in a way that minimises the negative impact of these interruptions.

- **early identification of strengths and development**
- **tailored development plans;**
- **Providing assistance with further study options, including during periods of maternity leave if desired.**
- **addressing blockages to the practical implementation of performance review and career management processes;**



Career Development

Initiatives aimed at developing women's careers

- Clarifying responsibility for career management at a site level;
- Establishing a leadership development program for women;
- Establishing a sector wide network for professional women;
- Providing gender awareness training for women
- Establishing a mentoring scheme; and
- Identifying and profiling female role models in the sector



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



The MCA believes that if the industry can

- improve the methods it uses to engage women in operational decision making;
- can create a work environment that is non-discriminatory and that values diversity;
- develop structures to maximise the community benefits to women of mining activities; and

.... then we will improve our performance, build our 'social licence to operate', and provide a more attractive career option for women of all ages and cultures.

