



# MCA Gender Diversity White Paper

---

Summary Document

---

March 2014



# MCA Gender Diversity White Paper

---

## Summary Document

---

March 2014

### Contents

Business case for increased female participation	// 3
Industry performance: Historical under-representation, with signs of improvement	// 4
Industry progress	// 6
Key impediments	// 7
Recommended solutions: MCA Workforce Gender Diversity White Paper, June 2013	// 8
MCA Gender Diversity Engagement Strategy	// 9

For further information, please contact:

Chris James, Assistant Director – Workforce Skills  
Phone 03 8614 1804 or email [chris.james@minerals.org.au](mailto:chris.james@minerals.org.au)

# Business case for increased female participation

Equity, especially if expressed as the need for a fair go, is an agreed concept with most Australians – however, increasingly, arguments for greater gender diversity revolve around a business case.

There are a number of factors here:

- Overcoming skills shortages - the acute skills shortages this industry has experienced, and the need to expand the talent pool
  - » New graduates in geoscience between 2010 and 2015 are forecast to meet less than 20 per cent of new and replacement demand. In mining engineering, the figure is 40 per cent
- Overcoming future labour shortages - the commencement in 2011 of what will be a flood of Baby Boomer retirements in the context of our ageing population
- Regaining lost productivity - The Grattan Institute Report *'Game-changers: Economic reform priorities for Australia'* indicates that there are three big three reforms, that could each increase the size of the Australian economy by around \$25 billion – one is female participation
- Capturing lost talent - The increasing number of highly qualified women entering the workforce and wanting to make an important contribution – some may have children but want to stay engaged in the workforce at the same or a higher level
- Broader team perspectives
  - » Teams with gender diversity have been shown to lead to improved, more creative decision-making and higher levels of innovation, according to findings by The Chamber of Minerals & Energy Western Australia and Anita Borg Institute for Women & Technology.
  - » Companies with women directors delivered significantly higher return on equity, operating result (EBIT) and stock price growth (McKinsey & Co, The Reibey Institute).
- Meeting Government and community expectations, impacting on social licence to operate – Workplace Gender Equality Act compels companies to report 'gender quality indicators' covering female management and board participation

# Industry performance – historical under-representation, with signs of improvement

Gender diversity in mining has historically been a story of female underrepresentation, with some encouraging but slowly developing signs of improvement in recent years.

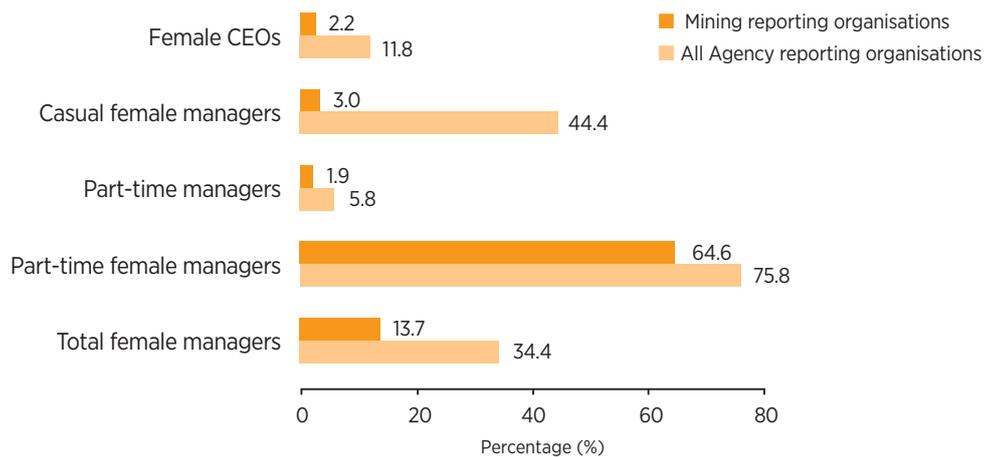
Women are underrepresented in the mining industry, particularly in management and on-site occupations. Originally, this was enforced by both regulation and custom, with remnants of the latter receding but still in evidence.

While overall numbers of women have increased markedly in recent years, the ratio of female participation has not.

Since 1998, the female participation in the mining workforce has risen from 11 per cent to 15 per cent according to ABS data – in between, it has tended to rise and fall in line with economic cycles.

Over the recent period of rapid growth in the industry (2004-12), female employees grew almost three fold, from 13,000 to 38,000.

## Female CEO and managerial representation



Source: Agency reporting data from compliant organisations, 2012

Industry Snapshots, Mining, Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2012

An historical analysis of women's representation in various roles in companies reporting to the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA)\* in 2006 and 2010 shows an improvement in all roles, including Administration, Management and above, Professionals and Operators, but a slight drop in Executives and Directors.

Female representation in the top five mining industry occupations varies, with low representation among metal fitters and machinists (0.6 per cent) to a relatively high representation across truck drivers (20.4 per cent).

---

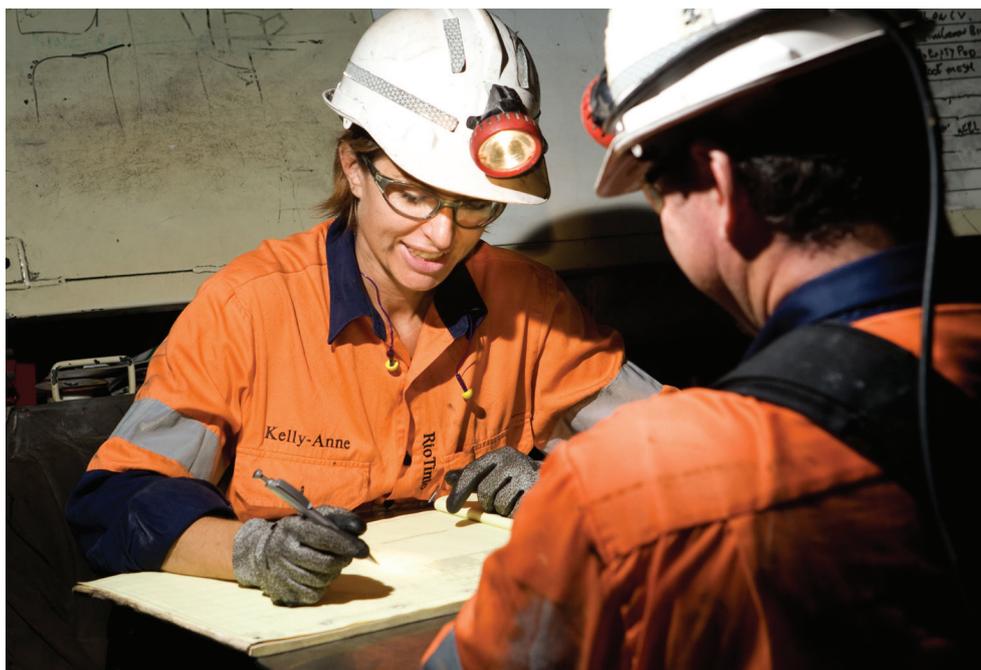
**Top five occupations in the mining industry**

---

Occupation	Total number	Number of females	Number of males	% Female	% Male
Drillers, miners and shot firers	39,283	2,299	36,984	5.9	94.1
Metal fitters and machinists	14,575	90	14,485	0.6	99.4
Other building and engineering technicians	8,369	766	7,603	9.2	90.8
Truck drivers	7,305	1,488	5,817	20.4	79.6
Electricians	5,503	102	5,401	1.9	98.1

*Source: This table is based on ABS Census 2011, 'Australia (Statistical Local Area), Occupation by Sex and Industry of Employment', and is not directly comparable with the Agency reporting organisations.*

Industry Snapshots, Mining, Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2012



# Industry progress

There has been progress in terms of:

- Application of Sex Discrimination legislation by companies and corresponding culture change – harassment is viewed in survey work as more low level and subtle, but discrimination is still perceived as an issue.
- Foundation of and growth in Women in Mining and Resources groups, along with more sophisticated approaches to networking and mentoring
- A much stronger body of research and knowledge, often funded by the industry
- A suite of initiatives around the celebration of success, for example scholarships for women and awards, and many more senior female role models, eg:
  - » MCA Scholarships for Women in Mining for AICD Company Directors Course sponsored by BHP Billiton and Downer EDI Mining
  - » BHP Billiton MCA Women in Engineering Scholarship
- Parental Leave legislation and a relatively strong performance by the industry in terms of conditions offered vis a vis other industries
- Many more women employed in mining, although the percentage has not risen markedly since 1998 (11 per cent to 15 per cent)
- The growing realisation by companies that there is a strong business case for gender diversity, leading to increased employee engagement and productivity
- Many major companies that are well advanced with sophisticated gender diversity strategies, many of whom have instituted hard targets and KPIs in this area.

On a summary of paid parental leave results compiled by the WGEA, 61.8 per cent of mining companies offer paid maternity leave over an average duration of 12.1 weeks versus 51.7 per cent of companies across all industries across an average duration of 9.7 weeks.

---

## Summary of paid parental leave survey results, 2012

---

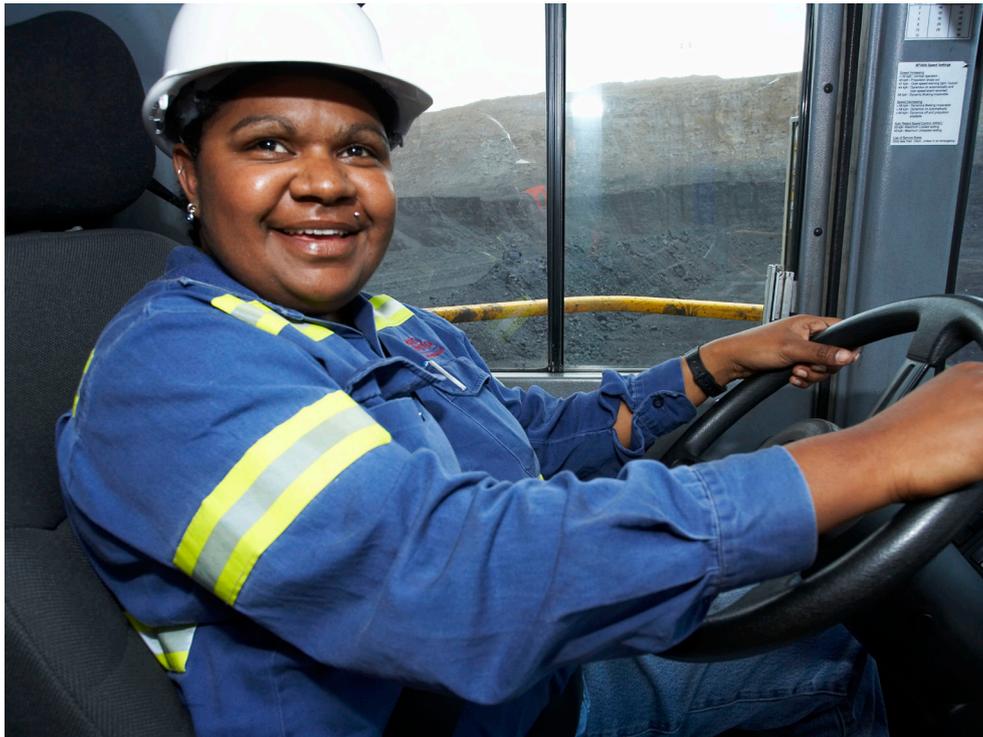
WGEA survey results	Mining	All Agency reporting orgs	Comparison: all reporting orgs with mining
Provide paid maternity leave (%)	61.8	51.7	▲
Average duration (weeks)	12.1	9.7	▲
Plan to introduce paid maternity leave in the next 12 months, if not currently offered (%)	23.1	5.1	▲
Provide paid paternity leave (%)	45.6	38.1	▲
Average duration (weeks)	1.4	1.6	▼
Plan to introduce paid paternity leave in the next 12 months, if not currently offered (%)	18.9	6.1	▲

\*Male dominated industries lead the way on parental leave'. Workplace Gender Equality Agency, February 2013

# Key impediments

While the industry has made progress in attracting women since the late 1990s, a number of impediments remain, around:

- Female study choices at school, TAFE and university
- A lack of qualified mentors
- A lack of Management Skills to deal with diversity
- The lack of confidence among many women to 'lean in' on their career
- The masculine image and culture of the industry
- Working conditions – long hours/lack of part-time work/emphasis on FIFO and remote work
- Lack of appropriate on-ramps for Return to Work
- 'Reasonable' objections – the view that it's ok for there to be a permanent deficit of women because of gender orientation towards certain careers or childbirth or the supposed lack of qualified women directors



# Recommended solutions

MCA Workforce Gender Diversity White Paper

June 2013

## **Image and perception, which includes**

- Education around the benefits, particularly the business case for employing more women
- Advertising, that is putting our money where our mouth is
- Early attraction measures, for example boosting school programs but use existing mechanisms such as Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy, Robogals, individual company initiatives
- Celebrating Success, with role models, scholarships and National Awards

## **Mobilising resources to increase diversity, which includes**

- Systematising Mentoring and Networking through the Minerals Tertiary Education Council (MTEC) and better linking with WIM groups and Robogals and company recruitment/vacation programs
- Keeping the Talent Pool Alive with better matching of talent to vacancies, including at Board level
- An Industry Ambassador to showcase the gender diversity agenda at a CEO level

## **Building a diverse culture, which incorporates**

- CEO buy-in from the top down
- Workplace Flexibility, including flexible rosters and shifts, greater availability of part-time work and job sharing
- Training of Managers – gender diversity considerations to be incorporated into management/ leadership training, backed by performance KPIs

## **Implementing rigorous benchmark measures, which involves**

- Benchmarking tools/scorecards/ data, including shaping gender diversity statistics produced by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and Skills DMC and a calendar of gender diversity events to co-ordinate effort in the space
- Targets – those we have spoken to believe that targets rather than quotas are the way to go; Australian business culture is such that if there are no targets, it won't get done.

# MCA Gender Diversity Engagement Strategy

July 2013 – June 2014

The White Paper is being followed up with an Engagement Strategy to lock in progress at the company level:

- To implement the recommendations of the White Paper
- Partner with MCA membership companies to identify industry-wide initiatives that will create the step-change required to increase female representation in the mining sector.
- To encourage a move beyond successful but piecemeal approaches to a more integrated program of work.
- Achieving a consistent and informed understanding of the business case for improving gender diversity within the mining sector.
- Ensure that 'leading practice' gender diversity practices are embedded in the industry's culture in the same way as safety, sustainability and indigenous inclusion.





**Minerals Council of Australia**

Walter Turnbull Building,  
44 Sydney Ave, Forrest ACT 2603  
(PO Box 4497, Kingston ACT 2604)

P. + 61 2 6233 0600 | F. + 61 2 6233 0699

W. [www.minerals.org.au](http://www.minerals.org.au) | E. [info@minerals.org.au](mailto:info@minerals.org.au)