



Australian Women in Resources Alliance
Strength through workforce diversity

09

THE WAY FORWARD GUIDE TO BEING RECOGNISED AS A PREFERRED EMPLOYER OF WOMEN

Organisations compete for talent. This is particularly true in the resource, construction and allied industries where specific skills are in high demand and work environments are often remote and challenging. Employers can ensure that candidates in the labour market – and their existing female employees – know that the company is committed and invested in engaging, including, valuing and developing their female employees by demonstrating their status as a *preferred employer of women*. In the Australian resource industry, AWRA Recognised™ is a unique and innovative program through which a company's diversity and inclusion strategy, implementation, results and outcomes can be assessed against legislative and reporting standards, as well as world's best practice, and the organisation's status can be exhibited as a key part of its employer brand.

There are a number of reporting and legislative requirements regarding gender diversity for organisations with more than 100 employees and/or ASX listed organisations. These requirements are outlined in the boxes [The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#) and [ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations](#) at the end of this guide.

Whether or not you have to comply with these requirements, your organisation should strive to work at best practice and stand out from its competitors. There are a number of state and national industry awards that recognise achievements in diversity and inclusion (D&I) (see box [Industry Employer Citations & Awards](#) at the end of this guide).

Successful implementation and operation of any strategy and program requires measurement and evaluation. The AWRA Recognised™ Program incorporates a widely accepted set of diversity and inclusion benchmarks developed in a US federally-funded research project by O'Mara and Richter (2011)¹, now operationalised in

GenderEconomics.com's Diversity Program Review Framework™ (DPRF)².

The DPRF diagnostic tool assesses and measures the effectiveness of the organisation's diversity and inclusion program using five dimensions:

- Program Management Capability
- Cultural Integration and Acceptance
- Organisational Vision and Strategy
- Innovation through Diversity and
- Performance

Organisations undergo an assessment of their workplace policies, procedures and most importantly, practices to assess the organisation's capability maturity against best practice management of workplace (gender) diversity.

The assessment outcome report provides concise feedback on an organisation's current diversity strategy, and together with the capability maturity model, helps an organisation to plan the changes

necessary to reap the rewards of a gender diverse workforce whilst taking into account the different stages of the organisation's journey toward best practice.

In addition, the underpinning framework allows AWRA and the organisation to establish a baseline effectiveness measure of the gender diversity program for future monitoring and reporting against the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 Gender Equality Indicators (GEIs).

The framework uses a Capability Assessment Matrix, to assess current capability and includes measurements specifically targeting gender diversity.

The process allows organisations in the resource industry to be 'recognised' for their level of achievement in gender diversity and women's workforce participation and graded against international best practice using the capability model.

Platinum						100%
Gold						75%
Silver						50%
Bronze						25%
Non-Compliant¹						0%
Measurement Dimension	Program Management	Cultural Integration & Acceptance	Organisational Vision & Strategy	Innovation through Diversity	Performance	Maturity Level
CAPABILITY						

¹Does not comply with WGEA Reporting Standards
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WHAT DO THE AWRA RECOGNISE STAMPS MEAN?

- ☐ **NON COMPLIANT** *Does not comply* with relevant legislation.
- ☐ **BRONZE** *Compliance* has been achieved. The program complies with existing legislative reporting requirements (entry standard), including Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012) reporting requirement.
- ☐ **SILVER** The organisation is *aware* and the program is *building*. There is an awareness of the advantages of gender diversity, an effective gender diversity program is on track to reap the benefits of gender diversity as outlined in the business case or strategy.
- ☐ **GOLD** *Corporate Social Responsibility* has been fulfilled. Gender diversity is seen as an important business enabler. The organisation actively supports community programs and embraces its corporate social responsibility demonstrating action follows rhetoric.
- ☐ **PLATINUM** *Transformative state* has been reached. The organisation has recognised and leveraged its gender diversity programs. It is a leading proponent of gender diversity and this ethos is embedded in all aspects of organisational life.

- A Bronze award is the minimum standard and represents compliance with the future WGEA reporting requirements. This is the 'entry standard'.
- The AWRA Recognised™ Program assessment reflects an organisation's progress along their diversity journey, how well the program itself is performing and what is the organisation's capability maturity against international benchmarks.

The five-day review process includes:

1. A program (desktop) review;
2. A capability assessment mapped to the journey of your program;
3. A survey instrument to capture stakeholder feedback; and
4. A comprehensive report with comments and findings.

The process consists of the following key activities:

1. AWRA schedules a meeting with the organisation 10 days prior to the scheduled start date;
2. The organisation provides a Project Sponsor and Project Manager, the latter of which identifies stakeholders and survey respondents and provides all required documentation to the AWRA Assessor;
3. The Project Sponsor is required to clear the way by showing support for the assessment and ideally will provide a summary overview of the organisation's gender diversity program to be included in the AWRA Recognised™ Program Assessment Report;
4. The AWRA Assessor agrees with the Project Manager the items to be included in the desktop audit and provides a 25 item survey template to be distributed by the Project Manager to respondents (electronically);
5. The Project Manager supplies required documents to the AWRA Assessor;
6. The AWRA Assessor provides a report with comments and findings.

BENEFITS OF THE AWRA RECOGNISED™ PROGRAM

- AWRA Recognised™ provides a rich and revealing evaluation of companies' diversity and inclusion activities, imbuing the assessment process and its outcome with validity, credibility and perceived brand value, and providing organisations with practical information to guide their D&I improvement strategies.
- The program is consistent with existing legislative and reporting requirements (including the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Act 2012 and the ASX Corporate Governance Council Diversity Recommendations).
- The 'AWRA stamp' distinguishes among different levels of maturity and performance so that high-functioning recipients have a competitive benefit and lesser performers receive both acknowledgement of their achievements and an aspirational goal for future re-assessments.
- This initiative has been successfully piloted in a company servicing the Australian oil and gas industry; AWRA is working hard to develop the initiative into an industry-wide and annualised program of assessments, providing rich information for resource employers and leading to an increased investment in diversity and inclusion in the industry.

WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY ACT (2012)

Under the new [Workplace Gender Equality Act \(2012\)](#), the reporting requirements of organisations with more than 100 employees (relevant employers) have altered from those in the [Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act \(1999\) \(superseded\)](#). The [Workplace Gender Equality \(Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators\) Instrument 2013 \(No. 1\)](#) has been made, establishing the specific reporting matters that will apply under the gender equality indicators in the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*.

The Indicators to be reported by relevant employers are:

Gender Equality Indicator 1 – gender composition of the workforce. This indicator seeks information about the gender composition of relevant employers in a standardised format. It is intended to cover a range of workforce characteristics including occupation, classification and employment status. This will enable the aggregation of data across and within industries and will be invaluable to employers to assist them understand the characteristics of their workforce, including occupational segregation, the position of women and men in management and patterns of potentially insecure employment.

Gender Equality Indicator 2 – gender composition of governing bodies of relevant employers. The term ‘governing body’ is broad, and means a board of directors, trustees, committee of management, council or other governing authority of the employer.

Gender Equality Indicator 3 – equal remuneration between women and men. This indicator enables the collection of aggregate information about remuneration of women and men performing the same or comparable tasks within and across occupations and industries. The confidentiality of remuneration information is ensured and provided for in the WGE Act.

Gender Equality Indicator 4 – availability and utility of employment terms, conditions and practices relating to flexible working arrangements for employees and to working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities. This indicator seeks to improve flexible working arrangements for employees, and also improve the capacity of women and men to combine paid work and family or caring responsibilities, which are fundamental to gender equality and maximising Australia’s skilled workforce.

Gender Equality Indicator 5 – consultation with employees on issues concerning gender equality in the workplace. This indicator is to ensure that consultation occurs between employers and employees on issues concerning gender equality in the workplace. Examples of consultation include employee surveys and focus groups.

Gender Equality Indicator 6 – sex-based harassment and discrimination. Each relevant employer is to report on sex-based harassment and discrimination in the workplace. This could include any sex-based harassment and discrimination prevention strategy or policy. The inclusion of a grievance process in any sex-based harassment and discrimination prevention policy. Workplace training, if any, for managers on sex-based harassment and discrimination. The frequency of workplace training about sex-based harassment and discrimination

The reporting period of 2012-2013 will be a transition year with no changes to the reporting requirement of a workplace profile, but the new notification and access provisions under the Act will apply. Employers will be required to make these reports available to employees and shareholders and to notify relevant unions when the report has been published. Unions and employees will be given an opportunity to comment on the information.

From 1 April 2013 - 31 March 2014, relevant employers are required to report on the gender indicators. However, minimum standards will not yet apply.

From 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015, relevant employers will be required to report on the gender equality indicators and comply with minimum standards which will be released in the next two years.

There will be new consequences for non-compliance starting in the 2013-14 reporting year, enabling the Agency to name a non-compliant employer in a report to the Minister or in a newspaper. Non-compliance can also affect the company’s eligibility to compete for contracts under the Commonwealth procurement framework and also their eligibility for Commonwealth grants or other financial assistance. The Agency no longer has the capacity to waive reporting requirements of compliant employers that they have under the previous Act.

INDUSTRY EMPLOYER CITATIONS & AWARDS

[Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice for Women](#)

The former Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, now the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, had Employer of Choice for Women awards which were awarded to organisations who demonstrated a strong commitment to providing equal opportunities to women and recognising and advancing female employees.

As the legislation governing this agency has now changed to the *Workplace Gender Equality Agency Act (2012)* this is currently under review to reflect changes made in the legislation. The new employer of choice criteria are intended to be more simple and streamlined and relate to the new online reporting to be introduced in 2013-2014 reporting year.

[Australian Women in Resources Alliance \(AWRA\) Award](#)

The AWRA Award each year recognises an organisation that has developed outstanding and/or innovative strategies to increase the attraction and retention of female workers. The winner will have implemented workplace initiatives and practices that directly enhance the success of the organisation.

Entries for the award open in March each year. Submissions are required and ask the applicant to demonstrate the opportunity/challenge identified by the organisation; how the organisation developed and implementing the solution and also the outcomes and success metrics.

[Resources Awards for Women – Queensland – Best Company Initiative Award](#)

The Resources Awards for Women (RAW) acknowledge and promote the contribution and achievements of women in the minerals and energy sectors while advocating the industry as a career option for women, and provide female role models and ambassadors for the sector.

They are presented at QRC's annual International Women's Day Breakfast, which provides a flagship networking opportunity for women in the industry. The awards are run in association with Women in Mining and Resources Queensland (WIMARQ).

[The Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA \(CMEWA\) Women in Resources Awards - Outstanding Company Initiative](#)

The Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA (CMEWA) Women in Resources Awards recognise individuals and organisations working to build a world-class industry that provides attractive career opportunities and enhances the recognition and participation of women. The Outstanding Company Initiative Award a company that has implemented an innovative initiative which demonstrates successful attraction, retention and/or promotion of women in the resource industry. The company initiative must demonstrate strategies and measurable outcomes that increase the attraction, retention and promotion of women in the WA resources sector. The initiative must have been in place for a minimum of 12 months.

[Women in Mining NSW \(WIMIN NSW\) Awards – The Outstanding Initiative Award](#)

In 2013 Women in Mining NSW held their inaugural Women in Mining NSW Awards. The awards include the Outstanding Initiative Award, which recognises individuals/companies who have put in place initiatives to attract and retain women in the NSW mining sector, particularly in areas where women are underrepresented.

[AHRI Diversity Awards](#)

The Australian Human Resources Institute's (AHRI) Diversity Awards acknowledges the growing focus on the importance of diversity in Australian organisations. The AHRI Diversity Awards recognise the outstanding individuals and organisations that have demonstrated excellence in the contributions they have made to their business and the HR profession, specifically in the area of diversity. The selection process of the awards finalists is determined by a judging panel of independent HR and business leaders from Australian organisations. This means the awards finalists are selected through a thorough, rigorous, independent and transparent process.

Award categories include Diversity Champion CEO, Age Diversity in the Workplace, Gender Equity in the Workplace, Inclusive workplace of the year and the Sir Ken Robinson Award for Workforce Flexibility.

ASX CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The [ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations](#) apply to all publicly listed entities, including companies and trusts (Relevant Entities). The 2011 ASX annual reporting cycle was the first in which the ASX recommendation (under Principle 3 of the Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations) that Relevant Entities address and report on gender diversity was followed.

Principle 3 advises that:

- Companies should establish a policy concerning diversity and disclose the policy or a summary of that policy. The policy should include requirements for the board to establish measurable objectives for achieving gender diversity and for the board to assess annually both the objectives and the progress in achieving them (Recommendation 3.2 of Principle 3);
- Relevant Entities should establish and disclose a diversity policy; such a policy should require the Relevant Entity's board to establish measurable objectives for achieving gender diversity and report annually, in its annual report, on progress towards achievement of these objectives as well as the proportion of women employed in the whole organisation, the proportion of women in senior executive positions and proportion of women on the board (Recommendations 3.3 and 3.4 of Principle 3).

Departures from these recommendations should be explained in the Relevant Entity's corporate governance statement in the annual report.

TO ACCESS OTHER RESOURCES ON THIS TOPIC

- <http://www.amma.org.au/awra/awra-recognised>

REFERENCES

1. J O'Mara & A Richter, *Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmark: Standards for Organizations Around the World*, 2011, retrieved 5 March 2013, < http://omaraassoc.com/pdf/GDiB_2011.pdf >
2. <http://diversityprogramreview.com/>

The Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) is an industry-led initiative dedicated to helping employers attract, retain and reap the rewards of women in resources workplaces.

AWRA is driven by Australia's resource industry peak body, the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA), and supported by the Australian Government through the National Resource Sector Workforce Strategy.



Australian Government

**Department of Industry, Innovation,
Climate Change, Science, Research
and Tertiary Education**