

# MEDIA RELEASE

August 21, 2014

## Resource industry job stats show gender focus needs revival

THE resource industry's national gender diversity initiative, the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA), is calling for greater efforts to increase the number of women in male-dominated roles, following a recent decline in women's workforce participation.

[Latest employment data](#) reveals the number of women working in the resource industry fell from 15.5% of the total workforce to 13.9% in the year to May 2014.

Tara Diamond, executive director of the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) which is the peak body facilitating AWRA, says areas of the industry traditionally dominated by men should be the immediate focus of diversity-savvy employers.

"There are 37,000 women working across Australia's mining, oil and gas sectors – about 3,400 less than 12 months ago," Ms Diamond says.

"This decline shows that as the resource industry's skills demands evolve, driven by many projects moving from construction into production, employers must focus on attracting and retaining women in their workforces.

"Specifically, the statistics show coal mining, metal ore extraction and quarrying activities have all gone backwards in terms of their gender balance over the past 12 months.

"While there are many successful efforts across the industry to attract and retain more women generally, achieving a gender balance in these site-based, male-dominated roles presents the greatest challenge."

Interestingly, the ABS stats show the oil and gas sector is the only area of the resource industry where the proportion of women employees increased over the past 12 months. Since May 2013, an additional 1,800 women joined the sector, boosting its female participation to 23.5%.

To ensure other areas of the resource industry can follow the positive trend of the oil and gas sector, Ms Diamond points to increased engagement in programs delivered by AWRA to assist employers in building a greater base of female talent.

"We recently launched the AWRA Recognise Program, which is the resource industry's first official assessment of gender diversity capability within an organisation. This allows employers to ensure their policies, procedures and practices attract women workers, increase retention and develop future leaders," she says.

"Many resource employers have demonstrated commitment to addressing gender imbalance, but greater momentum is now needed to lift overall participation levels.

"There are many successful women working in the industry today, highlighting not just the opportunities available, but also what women can achieve through a rewarding career in the resource industry."

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Kylie Sully on 0409 781 580 or [kylie.sully@amma.org.au](mailto:kylie.sully@amma.org.au).