

Women at Work

*Towards a Women's Employment and Workforce
Development Strategy*

Prepared for:

The Office for Women

and the

**Department of Further Education, Employment,
Science and Technology**

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Part 2

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July 2005

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Contents

1. Summary of Recommendations.....	iii
2. Introduction.....	1
3. Employment policy and strategy planning.....	3
4. South Australian Initiatives	16
5. States and Territories	22
6. Towards a Women’s Employment and Workforce Development Strategy ..	38
7. References.....	44
8. Appendix A: Index of Dissimilarity	46
9. Appendix B: State and Territory Initiatives	47

1. Summary of Recommendations

Women's Employment Strategy

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that a five year Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy be developed. The Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would be updated each year to respond to changing economic and labour market conditions. It would reflect Australia's commitments to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on women in Beijing, 1995.

Whole-of-Government Approach

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that the processes used to develop a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy should emulate the whole of government approach taken to develop *South Australia's Strategic Plan* and other key strategies.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy be viewed as a multi-government department/agency responsibility which is co-ordinated by the Office For Women with a steering group which includes representation from at least the Department of Trade and Economic Development, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Department of Education; Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment; Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA and the Social Inclusion Unit. Representation should also be sought from the Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Local Government organisations.

Audit of Initiatives

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that the work done in this study be the basis for a comprehensive whole of government audit of the impact of existing policies, programs and initiatives on women's employment be undertaken and that this be the basis for an annual audit across government departments and agencies regarding the impact of initiatives on women and employment. This audit could be undertaken as part of a wider audit of government initiatives and their impact on women like those undertaken in NSW and Western Australia which produces the Women's Report Card. The results of such an audit could also be a regular component of agency annual reports or a gender responsive budget assessment if such an initiative were introduced.

State-wide Consultation

Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that government engage in a consultative process with women across the state to establish priorities regarding women and employment. An annual employment consultative forum could be a key component of an ongoing consultative process.

Women at Work Unit

Recommendation 6:

It is recommended that the State government establish a Women at Work Unit to provide research and policy development support for the development and implementation of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy. The unit would employ a whole of government approach to research and policy development related to key issues including gender mainstreaming in employment, gender impact assessment and women's employment; pay equity, gender labour market segregation and work-life balance. The unit should be established in collaboration with the university sector and involve an exchange of expertise between the sectors.

Gender Mainstreaming

Recommendation 7:

It is recommended that the State Government apply the concept of gender mainstreaming to the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy for South Australia that includes processes for developing a gender responsive budget.

Gender Impact Assessment

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that Gender Impact Assessment be adopted to support the application of gender mainstreaming in the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia.

Recommendation 10:

It is recommended that existing policies and programs relating to women's employment in South Australia be subject to Gender Impact Assessment.

Indicators

Recommendation 11:

It is recommended that a suite of indicators be developed to help inform the development and monitoring of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia. The choice of indicators should be informed by European Union commissioned gender analysis of the adequacy of indicators used to monitor the gender impact of the European Employment Strategy.

Recommendation 12:

At the level of employment program development and monitoring it is recommended that a system of gender sensitive program performance monitoring and reporting be established.

2. Introduction

This report reviews women's employment policy development and initiatives in South Australia in the context of innovative approaches currently underway in Europe. It is part two of a report examining women's employment trends and issues in South Australia.

The first part of the report, 'A statistical review of trends in women's employment in South Australia', identified key trends in women's employment in South Australia over the last ten years. This part reviews recent women's employment policy and strategy development in South Australia and identifies lessons for policymakers from recent European experience. It identifies and reviews South Australian initiatives related to women's employment and provides an overview of interstate initiatives as a resource for South Australian policymakers. Finally the report outlines a range of recommendations to help inform the development of women's employment strategies in South Australia.

While the significant rise in female labour market participation over the last twenty years represents a significant increase in employment opportunities available to women, the persistence of gender based divisions in the workforce and in the household, perpetuates women's labour market disadvantage. For this reason, it is vital to develop gender sensitive employment and workforce development policies and strategies that are designed to reduce and ultimately eliminate, gender inequalities in employment.

There are significant differences between the experiences of women and men in the South Australian labour market as Part 1 of this report, *Womens Employment Trends in SA* identified. The report also highlights significant differences in the labour market experiences of different groups of women's based on factors such as class, race and geography. While this report focuses attention on the need for a gender sensitive approach to women's employment policy development it also demonstrates the need to develop policies which address the particular needs of indigenous women, women from a non-english speaking background, rural women, women with disabilities and women from different class backgrounds.

Among the key policy challenges that emerge from an examination of women's employment trends are the need to:

- Increase women's labour market participation, particularly in the context of the ageing of the workforce;
- Increase the number and proportion of women in secure rather than precarious forms of employment;
- Reduce occupational and industry gender segregation;
- Eliminate gender streaming in education and training;
- Eliminate direct and indirect discrimination in employment on the basis of sex;
- Increase workplace safety for women;

- Increase the representation of women in management and senior positions;
- Eliminate gender pay gaps;
- Overcome gender inequities in the division of labour in the household;
- Improve and protect public sector employment opportunities for women;
- Increase the availability of affordable childcare and elderly care to support women's labour force participation;
- Reform the retirement incomes system to ensure that women's retirement incomes are at least as favourable as those of men.

While there is currently no coherent women's employment or workforce development policy framework or strategy in place in Australia a range of policies have been developed in areas such as equal opportunity; affirmative action; women in leadership positions; women in non-traditional occupations and work/life balance. These do not yet constitute an integrated whole of government women's employment and workforce development strategy. The *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy for the development of South Australia's workforce provides a focal point for the pursuit of this objective. Inspiration for this can be found in the European Union where attempts are underway to develop gender sensitive employment and workforce development strategies in the context of the European Employment Strategy.

Inspiration for a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy for South Australia can also be found closer to home, through examining the range of women's employment initiatives in Australia. The following section reviews women's employment policy development in South Australia and identifies some lessons from European experience.

3. Employment policy and strategy planning

This section of the report reviews recent directions in relation to women's employment policy and strategy in South Australia in the context of wider strategic planning initiatives including *South Australia's Strategic Plan*. A number of important lessons for policymakers from recent experience with gender mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy are identified.

While the State Government has developed employment and skill formation policies arising from the *Skills for the Future Inquiry* and the *Review of SA Employment Programs* a comprehensive women's employment policy or strategy does not exist in South Australia. This deficiency is shared by other States and Territories as well as at a Federal level. There are however a number of policy initiatives in place which provide the basis for the development of an integrated and whole of government South Australian women's employment strategy.

The Labor government came to power in 2002 with a party platform that explicitly recognised that gender differences and inequalities needed to be taken into account in state policy making.¹ The South Australian ALP's *Platform for Government* adopted in 2000 recognised the economic and social significance of both the paid and the unpaid work contributed by women. It also recognised the need to appreciate the impact on women of the relationship between the economic, social, cultural and environmental spheres. It stressed that women from all backgrounds, 'particularly those who are disadvantaged', will be consulted in the policy process and that women's issues will be 'central factors in the policy and decision making of government'. The policy platform outlined a number of measures that the government promised to undertake across a range of areas, including education, training, housing, health, industrial relations, the community sector, the arts, justice, sport and recreation. It also identified particular approaches for different groups of women (the young, Aboriginal women, non-English-speaking women and women in the unpaid as well as the paid sectors). It promised an advisory body (the Premier's Council for Women) to oversee and monitor the impact of all government programs relating to women and to ensure that women's issues would be integrated into the policy, planning and reporting structures of all agencies. Finally, the platform stated there would be gender-sensitive reporting of the impacts of the budget.

After two years in office a number of actions have been undertaken to implement the Party's women's policy. In *Getting There: A Year of Progress for South Australian Women* (2003) the government summarised its record of achievements in relation to women's employment as follows:

- (1) growing women leaders and decision makers within government (eg making a priority efforts to increase women's participation on government boards and committees);

¹ For a discussion of the importance of taking gender differences into account in policy making see Sharp and Broomhill 2005.

- (2) supporting and encouraging women's participation in the workforce (eg targeted TAFE programs for women returning to the workforce);
- (3) establishing the Council for Women advising the Premier and developing strategies to monitor women's progress.

By mid 2004 this list of achievements had expanded to include the publication of *Statistical Profile: Women in South Australia* (2004) and a number of recommendations relating to women's employment within the public sector. Apart from these specific measures, a key element of Labor's approach has been to appoint the Premier's Council for Women, an advisory body that reports directly to the Premier with responsibility to develop policies to address women's inequalities.

A potential opportunity for integrating analysis of gender differences and inequalities in employment into planning, policies, budgets and reporting has emerged with the release of *Creating Opportunity*, the state's first comprehensive strategic plan (SA Government 2004a). The strategic plan identifies six inter-related objectives (growing prosperity, improving wellbeing, attaining sustainability, fostering creativity, building communities and expanding opportunities), with 79 specific targets to be implemented and monitored.

In practice, however, there are a number of gaps within this new overarching policy framework that could make the integration of gender issues into government employment policies problematic. Firstly, there is only one objective in the strategic plan that specifically addresses gender inequalities and only three gender-disaggregated target indicators (of 79 in all) are identified. The objective 'building communities', with its priority of making South Australia a place in which people care for each other and build 'social capital', specifies the following targets:

- to increase the number of women on all state government boards and committees to 50% on average by 2006;
- to have 50%, on average, of state government boards and committees chaired by women by 2008;
- to increase the number of female members of parliament to 50% within 10 years. (SA Government 2004a:Vol 1: 3, 7).

It is important that all of the objectives of the state's strategic plan have gender-disaggregated indicators. For example, the objective 'growing prosperity' includes indicators of employment, unemployment, population and migration but omits any recognition of the gender differences that characterise each of these issues. Gender-disaggregated objectives, targets and indicators are essential within these important areas in order to reflect stated government policy. Experience has shown that if gender goals, targets and indicators are not explicitly identified they will fall off the agenda.

Secondly, the objectives, targets and indicators need to be subjected to analysis and research in order to develop appropriate gender-responsive policies and budgets. As discussed above, the target indicator for volunteering (under the plan's objective of 'building communities') needs to be considered in the context that women provide the majority (70%) of unpaid work both within and outside their own homes and that the

vast majority of all unpaid work is undertaken by women aged 25–64 years (Ironmonger 2000; De Vaus, Gray and Stanton 2003). Setting targets to increase volunteer rates without a gender analysis can be a recipe for increasing the time burdens of women of workforce age.

Thirdly, the SA strategic plan seeks to encompass policy development, budgetary decision making and resource allocation, monitoring and reporting. This 'whole-of-government' approach to planning states that the intention is that 'all Government agencies will base their plans, budgets and programs on its key directions and strategies' (SA Government 2004a: Vol 1, 3). The task remains to put in place structures and processes that enable this to be done in a gender-responsive manner in accordance with Labor's women's policy. While the strategic plan (p 47) refers to the Premier's Council for Women's broader role to 'shape women's policy, particularly in areas related to income, housing, health and employment', the process remains problematic. The recently appointed three-person committee for ensuring that the SA strategic plan targets and priorities are monitored and reported to Cabinet and the public could require agencies to report their progress on targets that are disaggregated for gender/age/race/socio-economic status. However, without a process for accessing gender expertise and advice this is unlikely to happen. The SA strategic plan's proposed linkages between targets, policy development, programs and the budgets of agencies raises the potential for ensuring gender responsiveness, but at the same time the lack of necessary processes and strategies make such gender responsiveness problematic. A number of recent initiatives designed to support gender mainstreaming and gender impact assessment will help to fill this gap.

The Office for Women have initiated a number of projects designed to support gender mainstreaming in policy, strategy and budget development in South Australia. It has commissioned a review of the *Statistical Profile of Women in South Australia* report which resulted in the *Gender Data Online* report prepared by the Australian Institute for Social Research in association with the Hawke Research Institute. This subsequently led to the establishment of the *Gender Data Online* project which is developing a web based portal to access a range of gender disaggregated data. The Office is involved in an Australian Research Council Linkage project, *Gender Impact Assessment: a new framework for producing gender-inclusive policy*, with the University of Adelaide and University of Western Australia's Business School. The project aims to develop tools, such as gender disaggregation, to provide a gender analysis of all aspects of public policy and programs (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:9).

At a broad level *South Australia's Strategic Plan* outlines a commitment to 'develop and implement strategies to deal with the causes of inequalities for women and to provide leadership to influence and shape women's policy, particularly in the areas related to income, housing, health and employment' (SASP 2004: 47). The Plan also outlines a range of general employment and skill formation related targets including:

- Better the Australian average employment growth rate within 10 years;
- Equal or better the Australian average unemployment rate within 5 years;

- Equal or better the Australian average youth unemployment rate within 5 years;
- Reduce regional unemployment rates;
- Raise the lowest incomes of South Australians relative to those of the average South Australian;
- Increase the proportion of the South Australian labour force with non-school qualifications from 50.7 per cent in 2002 to 55 per cent within ten years;

Once again there is a need for gender disaggregation of these targets. While the means by which some of these targets might be achieved have not yet been precisely articulated the findings of the *The Skills for the Future – Final Report of the Ministerial Inquiry into Skills* (Schofield, 2003) and the *Review of SA Employment Programs* (Spoehr, 2003) provide some inspiration for the development of new employment and skill formation policy and programs. The latter recommended that targets be developed for women in employment policy and programs (Rec 8, Rec 17). Both reports recommended the preparation of a workforce development strategy. This challenge was given to the Training and Skills Commission which released the *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State – a strategy for the development of South Australia's Workforce to 2010* report in August 2005. The report represents the first attempt to develop a comprehensive workforce development strategy in the State's history. The challenge remains however to apply principles of gender mainstreaming to the strategy to ensure that the differential labour market experiences and positions of women and men are explicitly acknowledged and addressed. There is no explicit recognition in the report of key women's employment trends and issues.

While a key objective of this report is to inform a gender sensitive approach to the preparation and implementation of employment and workforce development policies and strategies, overseas experience demonstrates that there is a need for a sophisticated and integrated whole of government approach to the development of women's employment strategies. There is also a need in this context to consider the interrelationship between a range of policy areas impacting on women's employment including economic, education and training, industrial relations, equal opportunity and affirmative action, health, housing, child and elderly care and retirement incomes policies.

The following section provides an overview of recent developments in women's employment policy and strategy development in Europe in the context of efforts to apply gender mainstreaming to the development and implementation of the European Employment Strategy, sponsored by the European Union.

Overseas Experience

The development of gender sensitive employment policies, strategies and indicators has gained considerable momentum in the European Union where member countries report annually in relation to gender equality in the development and implementation of National Action Plans for employment. This takes place in the context of the European Employment Strategy. This section seeks to identify some of the lessons for South Australia from the European experience.

The European Commission of the European Union has undertaken a number of assessments of gender equality in the European Employment Strategy. These variously assess gender equality and the nation members' National Action Plans for employment; gender mainstreaming in European employment and indicators used to measure gender equality in the European Employment Strategy.

The first European Employment Strategy² was established in 1997 at the Luxembourg summit, having been earlier defined by the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam. The three overarching goals of the European Union employment policy were full employment, improving quality and productivity at work, and strengthening social cohesion (EGGE, 2003:2).

The strategy comprises four pillars including employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities. There has been a growing emphasis on gender equality in the European Employment Strategy, which is expected to be reflected in the respective member states' National Action Plans for employment. In 1999 changes to the guidelines included a requirement that each of the pillars be gender mainstreamed. A gender sensitive approach to employment policy was re-emphasised at the 2000 Lisbon summit on the European Employment Strategy which called on member states to "strengthen their efforts to include and make visible a gender perspective across all the pillars" (EGGE, 2003:1).

Member states at the Lisbon summit agreed to set targets for higher employment participation rates in line with the European Union targets of 70 percent for all and 60 percent for women, to be reached by 2010. At the 2001 Stockholm summit intermediate targets of 67 percent (total) and 57 percent (for women) by 2005 were agreed to. In addition a target of 50 percent for older men and women (55-65) by 2010 was agreed

The 2000 Lisbon conclusions were incorporated into the 2001 Employment Guidelines which had the broad aim of building the 'conditions for full employment in a knowledge-based society' (EGGE, 2003:1). The role of women's employment and quality jobs were clearly stated in the European Union guidelines which include three principles related to Pillar 4 of 'Strengthening Equal opportunities for Women and Men':

- 1) adoption of a gender mainstreaming approach including promotion of equitable access to active labour market policies among women and men in unemployment, assessment of the gender impact of tax and benefit systems and application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value;

² This phase of European policy-making known as Open Method of Coordination (OMC) is '...an attempt to develop a new way of policy coordination, less reliant on hard law, and more open to member states defining their own specific interpretations of the policy framework and proceeding at a pace appropriate to their own context'. OMC started with European Employment Strategy in 1997 and has since been extended to other areas, particularly social inclusion (EGGE, 2004:4).

- 2) Member States (and social partners) required to tackle gender gaps in occupations and sectors and the improvement of career opportunities for women;
- 2) Member States to encourage reconciliation of work and family life.
Indicators adopted for monitoring progress of the European Employment

The Strategy includes methods for specifically monitoring equal opportunity. These are reviewed later in the report.

Gender Equality and the European Employment Strategy

The European Union goal of increased overall European employment rates and gender equality are seen as inter-related and mutually dependent. The European Employment Strategy states that:

(g)reater gender equality will not be achieved without further improvements in women's position within the labour market. At the same time the objective of European employment policy, that of raising the overall employment rate within Europe, is also dependent upon further mobilisation of women into the employment sphere (EGGE, 1998:1).

In reviewing the 2001 National Action Plans for employment, the European Union Employment Group for Gender Equity (EGGE) noted that there had been some beneficial effects on equal employment opportunities from attempts at gender mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy. Member states were encouraged to evaluate measures every five years rather than annually. In its review of member state strategies the EGGE noted that attention to the equal opportunities pillar has expanded due to a rise in the number of initiatives related to leave and care arrangements. Also noted was that more attention has been given to desegregation of the labour market through measures in training, education, awareness building and positive discrimination. They claim that there has been limited success in these areas so far. The EGGE concluded that attention to reducing gender gaps in employment and unemployment is still limited and that there should be greater concern regarding the trend of part-time work displacing women from full-time work and increasing gender gaps in employment. Overall, gender pay gaps were seen by the EGGE as largely being ignored. They stress the importance of involving fathers in care and the need to significantly expand childcare and elderly care facilities to help facilitate a better balance between work and family responsibilities between men and women (EGGE 2003:115,116).

The EGGE expressed concern that member states will focus on quantity rather than the quality of employment in meeting the European Union employment targets. It argued that the European Employment Strategy needs to influence social partners such as unions and employers and that the approaches adopted by employers may be a greater barrier to women entering employment than skills and training (EGGE 2003:114,117).

In order to achieve gender equality in dual earner households it was recommended that a review of employment, social and welfare systems be undertaken to tackle gender inequalities in structures and institutions outside the labour market (EGGE 2003:113).

The key recommendations of the EGGE include the need for:

- more and better monitoring and evaluation of policies;
- more resources for gender mainstreaming;
- tighter timescales and more defined targets;
- improvements in women's position in decision-making, expansion of equal opportunities expertise;
- recognition of the need to change the gendered nature of the labour market and not simply to address the issue of disadvantaged groups;
- the generation of stronger political will to implement gender mainstreaming (EGGE 2003:120-1).

Further recommendations, regarding indicators used in National Action Plans, were made by the EGGE including greater emphasis on the demand side of labour market; on the quality of jobs; actions of private companies and wages paid to women; addressing vertical gender labour market segregation as well as horizontal segregation; recognising women have a role to play in the knowledge economy; improvement and protection of employment in public sector; a more comprehensive and effective strategy in reconciliation measures³; and attention to gender aspects of tax and benefit systems with emphasis on individualisation of benefits (rather than discrimination in income tax system) due to growth of in-work benefits (EGGE 2003:121).

Gender Mainstreaming Employment Policy

The European Union have made considerable advances in applying gender mainstreaming to employment policy and strategy development in member states. The European Commission defines Gender mainstreaming as:

achieving gender equality through gearing all policies and measures for the purpose of equality as well as through specific measures (EGGE 2000:4). It states that the "The full development of gender mainstreaming involves a more holistic approach to policymaking, where the implications and interactions between policies fields are considered in advance of design and implementation of policies" (EGGE, 2004:4).

The three key objectives of gender mainstreaming in European employment policy are to promote gender equality; increase the likelihood of European employment policy achieving stated goals; and draw attention to need for employment policy to be situated in wider policy agenda, focused on inter-linkages between employment and social and welfare systems (EGGE, 1998:2).

³ The report expressed concern that there was an over reliance on reconciliation measures in NAPs to achieve equal opportunity but never-the-less these needed improving. Reconciliation measures are ones designed to achieve equal opportunity through such measures as in employment, unemployment and de-segregation, rather than, for example, equal pay (EGGE 2003:109).

In the context of the European Employment Strategy gender mainstreaming is described as a process designed to change policy agendas and implementation procedures for gender equality and continually audit and analyse policies to identify gender inequalities (EGGE, 1998:2). This involves recognition of the need for two methodological approaches to understand and address gender inequalities. The first requires differentiating between the individual and the household and the second adopting a life-course approach to understanding the impact of policies and contexts. These approaches are seen as critical for comprehending the various problems faced by women over their lifetimes.

An important tool for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy is Gender Impact Assessment. Gender Impact Assessment is designed to help evaluate a policy's success towards the objective of gender equality and can be used for improving policy design (EGGE, 2000:4). In the 2000 EU report Gender Impact Assessments were seen to be in an early stage of development and developing unevenly. It was recommended that there needs to be a clear statement on how inequality is reproduced in society and a need for a clear concept of equality to be adopted (EGGE, 2000:5). The report recommended a seven stage methodology for applying a GIA to employment policy measures. This approach is described in detail later in the policy options section of the report.

The 1998 EGGE report stated that there was a need to have gender mainstreaming in the development of statistics and monitoring techniques; and further development and application of methodologies for gender audits and gender impact assessments (1:2). By 2004 the EGGE reported that there was an urgent need to promote greater awareness of GM and develop tools to maintain progress in the Gender Mainstreaming process (EGGE 2004:96).

The long-term impact of gender mainstreaming on gender equality is not yet clear (EGGE 2003:116 or 117). It is clear however that Gender Mainstreaming is not well embedded in policy formulation and evaluation processes in member countries (EGGE, 2004:96). The EGGE report that there is a need to focus on gender equality as an outcome of Gender Mainstreaming rather than just improving women's employment or meeting particular employment targets. For example there is a danger that Gender Mainstreaming is being used to meet employment objectives rather than gender equality (EGGE 2003:113; EGGE 2004:97).

The EGGE indicate that there is a major gap in gender mainstreaming within the adaptability (third) pillar of the European Employment Strategy with member countries tending to eschew responsibility for gender discrimination in the workplace, leaving it to social partners at the enterprise level. While flexible work arrangements (part-time work, flexible hours) at work are seen by member countries as promoting gender equality their impact on gender gaps in the labour market are not adequately considered according to the EGGE (EGGE 2003:115).

The EGGE argue that there needs to be a better understanding of what Gender Mainstreaming aims to achieve and the right political and institutional preconditions to

ensure its successful implementation (EGGE, 1998:2). Furthermore they state that Gender Mainstreaming needs to be seen as a long term objective and permanent feature of policy development processes (EGGE, 1998:2).

Gender Sensitive Employment Indicators

The development and monitoring of employment policy requires the development and application of appropriate gender sensitive employment indicators. The European Union have considerable experience in this and have reviewed the appropriateness of various indicators over time.

In 2002 the EGGE released a major report examining indicators used to measure gender equity and equality in the European Employment Strategy. It made a range of recommendations designed to improve the suite of indicators being used. The EGGE found that the current suite of indicators were inadequate as they tended to obscure increasing gender gaps in employment and not sufficiently identify the factors contributing to these gaps. The EGGE identified alternative indicators to measure gender gaps in relation to unemployment, employment, industry and occupational segregation and income. These are summarised below.

Unemployment and employment

To better measure gender gaps in unemployment the EGGE made a range of recommendations including the introduction of the standardised unemployment gender gap, defined as the difference in unemployment rates of women and men divided by the male unemployment rate; include unemployment gaps by age group and education which would allow for monitoring unemployment by gender among target groups of the European Employment Strategy; include long term employment gender gaps; include the share of inactive who want to work as an indicator of hidden unemployment and labour supply potential; estimate flows in and out of unemployment by gender to capture the changing aspect of unemployment amongst employed, unemployed and inactive; and examine changes in absolute gender gap in relation to men and women's unemployment rates individually (EGGE, 2002: iii,15,16).

In relation to gender gaps in employment the EGGE recommended use of the standardised employment gender gap, defined as the difference between employment rates of women and men divided by the male employment rate, in order to have an indicator of the gender gap relative to the employment level; include the absolute employment gender gap in full-time equivalents to indicate inequality in volume of unemployment; and include absolute employment gender gap by age group and education to assess employment performance in target groups (EGGE, 2002:iv,26).

The EGGE also recommended indicators for measuring the quality of employment including an indicator of the gender gap in fixed-term contracts, part-time work, and short hours and long-hours of work; and regarding social security protection an indicator for the gender gap in the coverage of the social protection system defined as the share of employed women covered by social security divided by the share of employed men covered by social security (EGGE, 2002:iv,31).

Industry and Occupational Segregation

The IP-Index (the standardised or Karmel and Maclachlan Index) used to monitor segregation in the European employment strategy by occupation and sector is defined as the proportion of the workforce (persons in employment) which would need to change jobs in order to remove segregation. The 2002 report concluded that none of the traditional segregation indices are completely satisfactory for measuring segregation over time (EGGE, 2002:v). When self employed or part-time employees are excluded from the calculations there are major differences in the segregation level.

From 1997 to 2000 the segregation level decreased at the EU level but went in different directions for member states. Different factors were behind segregation levels that increased and levels that decreased [EGGE, 2002:vi]. Methodological issues raised regarding segregation indices were that single indices could hide changes that pull in different directions, e.g., no change in the indicator does not mean little change in the pattern of segregation, and that all indices are dependent on occupational classifications that tend to reflect gender inequality in the labour market: traditional men's occupations in manufacturing specified in detail but women's occupations aggregated into very broad categories covering a lot of different occupations.

In respect to monitoring segregation, the 2002 EGGE report makes a lengthy list of recommendations in the context of trends in segregation that were identified. It concluded that there is likely to be a positive relationship between levels of female employment and segregation and that the reduction of segregation should be treated as a long term process, monitored year to year.

It recommended that:

- Indices of segregation should be calculated with and without part-time workers and segregation monitored for all employees and all in employment.
- Attention needs to be given to the sectoral structure of the economy as, e.g., excluding agriculture or the public sector can have a different impact.
- Generational changes need to be investigated with attention to lifecycle and inter-cohort patterns in career development.
- There be a requirement for more adequate measures of vertical segregation and investigation of the fact that gender segregation is greater in unpaid than paid work. Because problems in measuring segregation mostly arise from using a single index for a complex process, current indices should be used in conjunction with decomposition techniques to interpret trends.
- Segregation indices calculations need to include and exclude part-time workers and the self-employed.
- Indices' results should be analysed by age and education level for identifying possible future trends.
- Finally, segregation indices should be combined with other indicators in order to analyse flows in the gender composition of occupations, e.g., between totally male, dominated, medium male dominated, mixed, medium

female dominated and totally female dominated occupations [EGGE, 2002:vi-viii].

Pay and Income

The indicator used to measure the gender pay gap in the European Employment Strategy is EO5 which is the ratio of women's net hourly earnings index to men's for paid employees working 15 or more hours broken down by private and public sectors. Some problems noted with the EO5 indicator are that a single ratio does not reveal the dynamic trends in women's pay position, as it does not take account of overall changes in wage structure and the impact of part-time employment (EGGE, 2002:viii-x).

The indicator used to measure gender income gap is EO6 which is the proportion of women earning less than 50 percent of national median annual income compared to the corresponding proportion of men [EGGE, 2002:viii]. It was reported that the EO6 is a good general measure but difficult to interpret as it combines the relative proportion of people on low income with a gender gap [EGGE, 2002:viii-x].

To overcome shortcomings in the indicators used the EGGE proposed changes to existing indicators measuring the gender pay gap, including measuring the ratio of women's annual (or monthly) net earnings to men's, and the ratio of women's hourly gross pay to men's; the ratio of all female part-timers' hourly pay to male full-timers' hourly pay excluding overtime; the proportion of female workers earning less than 2/3 of the median annual earnings of male full-timers and the proportion of female workers earning less than 2/3 of the median hourly pay of male full-timers [EGGE, 2002:xi].

A number of new indicators to measure the gender income gap were proposed including the ratio of women's average annual total income to men's, covering all working-age population; the ratio of women's average annual labour income to men's, covering all employees and self-employed; and the ratio of women's average annual wage income to men's, covering all employees [EGGE, 2002:xi].

CONCLUSION

In applying gender mainstreaming to employment policy and strategy development South Australian policy makers can draw inspiration from the European Union's considerable efforts to apply gender mainstreaming, gender impact assessment and gender sensitive indicators to the development and monitoring of the European Employment Strategy. The implications of this experience for the development of a women's employment policy/strategy for South Australia will be discussed in the final chapter of this report.

To address key women's employment policy challenges in South Australia it will be necessary to develop a whole of government approach to Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy development and implementation. This should take place in the context of the SASP and related strategies including *SA Works, Prosperity through People, Strategic Infrastructure Plan* and the soon to be released SA workforce development strategy. Some momentum is being generated in South Australia around

the application of gender mainstreaming to the development of public policies, strategies and budgets. The development of an overarching women's employment policy framework and strategy could provide an important focal point for work in this area over the next few years.

Despite the absence of over-arching women's employment policies and strategies in Australia the following sections indicate that a wide range of women's employment initiatives do exist in South Australia as well as in other States and the Northern Territory. The challenge remains to build on this experience and develop a sophisticated whole of government Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy for South Australia. The opportunity for this has been greatly advanced by the release of the *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy.

4. South Australian Initiatives

There are a range of State Government policies and programs that directly or indirectly impact on women's employment in South Australia. Few explicitly address issues related to women's employment and few contain gender based targets. In addition, there are no significant mechanisms in place to report on the gender impact of existing policies and programs on women's employment in South Australia.

Despite the lack of an overarching Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia there are a number of policies and programs directly or indirectly related to women's employment that should be noted.

Employment programs

The State Government provides a range of employment programs through the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) and the Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE). While there has not been a thorough evaluation of the impact of employment programs on women in South Australia, the *Review of SA Employment Programs* (Spoehr 2003) focused attention on the need for employment programs to address the needs of women and recommended that targets be set in relation to women in each program. The review noted that a weighting system had been developed to encourage group training companies to provide an increased number of places to women in non-traditional trades. A similar system exists in relation to the *Government Apprenticeship Program*. Data utilised in the preparation of the review demonstrates that gender disaggregated data is available in relation to various employment and training programs. For example a gender breakdown of data on the *Government Youth Training Program* and *Government Apprenticeship Program* is provided.

Following the review the *Review of SA Employment Programs* the State Government established the *SA Works* scheme which includes the following components:

- Regions at Work
- Indigenous Works
- Experience Works
- Youth Works
- Industry Works
- Public Sector Works

While all of these programs involve women none explicitly address issues affecting women in employment or include gender disaggregated targets. The *SA Works* scheme does however have an explicit focus on a number of population groups including Aboriginal people, mature age people and young people.

SA Works Program Overview

Regions at Work

Regions at Work is the centrepiece of South Australia Works, as learning and work programs will be planned and delivered to individuals in their local area. Regional employment and skill formation networks will be a mechanism for developing new partnerships and empowering local communities and regions. This focus means that individuals in their local communities will have better access to learning and work programs for local employment opportunities.

Indigenous Works

This priority area focuses on improving learning and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people. It will build on existing successful initiatives and expand pathways into the mainstream labour market. Existing programs will be reconfigured to increase employment and training opportunities including the number of apprenticeship places and the quality and level of mentoring and transition support. It will support the growth of Aboriginal enterprises, to promote economic independence for Aboriginal people. Whole of life strategies linking critical services in health, education, justice and employment will assist young Aboriginal people at greatest risk.

Experience Works

The ageing profile of the population and workforce has significant long-term implications for South Australia. It means that more opportunities will need to be made available for people aged 40 and over through the matching of training with workforce skills needs, and upskilling programs to retain older workers in jobs. This program will also link with other initiatives to influence employer attitudes and behaviours toward older workers. This is an opportunity to promote high performing work practices, which maintain the participation and productivity of an ageing workforce.

Youth Works

This priority area will ensure that 15-24 year olds share the benefits of our positive economic climate by ensuring access to relevant training and connection to sustainable employment. Priority will be given to those who are out of school, out of work and out of training through the development of whole of government responses to youth labour market issues. Significantly expanded pre-employment, pre-vocational and other relevant training programs will increase learning opportunities for young people. The program will contribute to the Government's goal of encouraging young people to complete 12 years of schooling or equivalent vocational education and training.

Industry Works

Government can play a significant role in facilitating new employment and skill formation opportunities arising from its investment and purchasing activity. This program will involve the development of new strategic partnerships with industry and government agencies involved in economic development, regional affairs, and employment and skill formation. It will ensure the Government receives employment dividends for its funding of major projects and purchasing of services. The program will also support business and industry in creating more jobs for South Australia.

Public Sector Works

The ageing of the South Australian public sector presents a number of challenges and opportunities, in terms of maintaining and increasing skill levels and providing employment opportunities for people disadvantaged in the labour market. This program will support the creation of a highly skilled and responsive public sector through the development of a Public Sector Workforce Development Plan, in conjunction with an expanded range of opportunities for those disadvantaged in the labour market.

Source: Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, 2003

There are a wide range of program activities undertaken under the umbrella of *SA Works*. These include the:

- Aboriginal Apprenticeship Program
- Aboriginal Employment Program
- Government Apprenticeship Program
- Government Youth Traineeship Program
- Group Training
- InSkill SA

- Ticket to Training
- Youth Conservation Corps
- Employment Assistance Program
- Employment 40 Plus

In addition and of particular note is the *Parents Return to Work* Program which is among the few employment/training programs that are explicitly targeted at women. It is aimed at parents wanting to return to the workforce who are older than forty and whose children are over the age of twelve. The program provides a \$1200 training credit for eligible persons.

Delivered through TAFE, the *Parents Return to Work* program provides a certificate in Women's Education - II, III or IV. It aims to “..assist women to develop the skills necessary for them to re-enter the workforce, and to provide a structured pathway for mature women wishing to study at a tertiary level.” It is designed to “increase women's knowledge of workforce and study opportunities, develop self-confidence and an awareness and understanding of the issues which affect women's lives” (<http://www.tafe.sa.edu.au/news/default.asp?id=19443&navgrp=469>).

Workforce Development Strategy

In August 2005 the State Government released the *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy for the development of South Australia's workforce (Government of South Australia 2005). It is the first attempt in history to develop a workforce development strategy for South Australia.

The vision of the strategy is for South Australia to have “an efficient, highly skilled workforce that supports a globally competitive economy and a socially inclusive community” (ibid, p 5). The strategy aims to support “The development of a skilled workforce capable of supporting and maintaining high standards of living for all South Australians” (ibid, p 3). A broad statement of objectives for the strategy includes reference to “ensuring that opportunities are provided for all targeted groups such as Indigenous people, women, people from non-english speaking backgrounds and people with a disability. The strategy does not however include specific strategies designed to address women's labour market disadvantage or gender disaggregated targets.

The *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy identifies three interrelated priorities including:

- The creation of a high skill economy
- Access to quality employment
- Shaping our future through better workforce planning

The broad vision, aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy would be greatly strengthened by a more explicit recognition of key women's employment issues and challenges. The existence of the strategy provides a focal point for gender

mainstreaming to ensure the development of a gender sensitive women's employment and workforce development strategy for South Australia.

Childcare

A number of children services initiatives designed to support to support work-life balance have been introduced in the context of the State Government's population policy. One program involves the integration of child care facilities for children from birth to eight years old. This program has begun at Sturt Street Community School, bringing together child care, preschool and junior primary up to Year 3. A program of child care scholarships has also been established to provide up to two-thirds of the cost of a Diploma in Community Services for child care workers wanting to upgrade their qualifications. At a broader level the State Government has recently undertaken a major inquiry into early childhood services. It released the findings of the *Inquiry into Early Childhood Services* in January 2005. While the inquiry found that South Australian families were "generally satisfied with the range of services that are available to support them and their young children" (Wright 2005:18-19) it noted a range concerns including:

- Uneven supply of basic services in education and health across the community, with supply problems being particularly evident in relation to childcare places and general services to rural areas.
- Changing community expectations suggest that greater levels of coordination and integration of services being the most highly sought improvement.
- There is also an expectation that the range of services for children will be seen in the context of other choice pathways for parents. These choices relate to family-friendly working arrangements, parenting leave options and paid maternity leave arrangements.

Industrial Relations

The South Australia government passed legislation to establish the *Fair Work Act 2004* in 2005. The *Act* promises to improve the position of women in employment through provisions related to carer and bereavement leave, pay equity, protections for contractors, labour hire employees and outworkers. The *Act* includes a new objective to "Facilitate the effective balance of work and family responsibilities" and requires the Industrial Commission to have regard to the ILO Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities in exercising its powers. A minimum standard is set within the *Act* for parental leave though the Commission is empowered but not required to apply it. The *Act* also sets a minimum standard in relation to more flexible use of sick leave, enabling the use of five of the ten days sick leave provided as carer's leave. A code of conduct for fair treatment of outworkers has been adopted and may be included by the Commission in Awards.

In addition to the *Fair Work Act 2004*, Sections 30 and 32 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* makes unlawful any discrimination in employment on the basis of a persons sex. These provisions are outlined in Appendix C.

Public Sector

The Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) focuses attention on the needs of particular groups including Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and women through equity and diversity and equal opportunity programs. Current programs include the *Aboriginal Recruitment and Development Strategy* and the *Employment Strategy* and the *Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities*. While the OCPE does not yet have a strategy focusing on women's employment in the public sector, consultations have been underway within government about how to make the public sector an employer of choice for women.

In 2004 the Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment held a forum for women working in the state government to discuss how to make the government an employer of choice. Three key themes emerged from the forum including: flexible work arrangements, career mentoring and support and selection and recruitment. The OCPE reports that flexible work arrangements were viewed by the participants as the most important issue affecting women's employment. Other themes that emerged included physical work structures, childcare and the involvement of men, particularly in senior positions, in implementing the changes that are needed to improve the position of women in the public sector (Office for the Commissioner for Public employment, correspondence, 10 August 2004). Since the forum the OCPE has consulted with the Office for Women regarding the findings. It is envisaged that collaborative projects will be undertaken in the near future. The OCPE is also investigating ways to place the issues that arose from the forum '...on the change agenda for the whole of government' (Office for the Commissioner for Public employment, letter, 10 August 2004).

In its 2003-04 Annual Report, the OCPE identifies bullying and harassment, flexible working arrangements and leave access as priority areas for improvement in the state public service (Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment, Annual Report of the commissioner for Public employment 2003-04, 2004:18-21).

Minimum standards have been set by the Commissioner in relation to voluntary flexible working arrangements as detailed in the box below:

Purchased leave:

Purchased leave is designed to enable employees to exchange an agreed reduction in their salary in return for extra periods of leave over a specified period. The leave is funded by salary deductions spread evenly over the total period of the agreement. Employees take additional leave in return for a regular lower amount of salary (while the rate of salary remains the same) over the specified period.

Flexi-time

Flexi Time is a flexible arrangement of working time which allows employees to negotiate how and when hours will be worked within agreed limits and conditions set by the chief executive, and with regard to the appropriate industrial instruments.

Compressed weeks

Compressed Weeks allows an employee to elect to work a lesser number of days per fortnight by working the same number of hours per fortnight over that number of days, instead of ten working days.

Part-time and job share

A part time employee works less hours than a full time employee and the hours worked are generally fixed and constant. Job sharing is a voluntary arrangement where one full time job is shared between two or more people with each person working part time on a regular ongoing basis.

Working from home

Working from home enables an employee to work from a home-based work location (instead of their usual office based location), which is usually connected electronically through email and phone to their workplace.

(OCPE Commissioners Standard 3.1, July 11 2005: 2-7)

A new standard has also been set for maternity leave in the South Australian public sector enabling women who have 12 months of continuous service to take 14 weeks paid maternity leave or paid adoption leave with pro-rate payment for leave taken on a half time basis. This supports a wider agenda within the public sector to introduce and encourage the uptake of provisions which help public servants to better balance their work and family responsibilities.

Conclusion

A number of important initiatives related to women's employment currently exist in South Australia. These provide the basis for the development of a more integrated, whole of government women's employment strategy. The review of trends in women's employment undertaken as part of this project identified a wide range of policy challenges in relation to women's employment in South Australia. A Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would provide a focal point for responding to these challenges in a more sophisticated and co-ordinated way.

The application of gender mainstreaming to the *South Australia's Strategic Plan, SA Works and the Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy would make South Australia a national leader in seeking to develop strategies to improve the position of women in employment and help overcome disadvantage experienced by women in the labour market.

5. States and Territories

This section reviews a range of women's employment and related initiatives that have been in operation in other Australian states and the Northern Territory. They illustrate the breadth of issues that a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy might encompass and provide practical examples of how particular issues are being addressed in the Australian context. In addition many of the initiatives involve whole of government approaches to the development and application of policies and strategies. Combined they are a resource for policymakers to draw upon in developing women's employment policy/strategy in South Australia.

The overview of initiatives provided below is summarised in table form in Appendix A.

Northern Territory

The Office of Women's Policy in the Department of the chief Minister of the Northern Territory government '...initiates, co-ordinates, implements and reports on whole-of-government responses to priorities for women...' (DEET 2005).

The Northern Territory government through the Department of Employment, Education and Training has developed the *Workplace Employment and Training Strategy 2003-2005*. There is no recognition of women as a target group in the strategy. The strategy does however focus attention on indigenous people, people with a disability and migrants, In 2005 priority has been given to support people with disabilities and long-term unemployed migrants to gain employment (DEET 2005).

The NT Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment has offered a range of programs focusing on women in leadership in the NT public service. These include the *Discovery – Women as Leaders* program, a sixteen-day program designed to develop leadership capabilities and personal effectiveness skills, *Management Skills for Women*, *New Opportunities for Women's Development Program*, *Springboard Women's Development Program*, and *Breaking/Tapping on the Glass Ceiling*. An indigenous women's development program is being developed for indigenous women in the Northern Territory public service.

In January 2005 the NT Cabinet accepted a policy paper on women in management which will result in changes to programs for women in management in the public service.

A work-life balance strategy for the NT public service has been developed with pilot projects planned for several agencies (see www.nt.gov.au/ocpe/equity/worklifebalance).

Queensland

The Queensland government's document, *Women in the Smart State: Directions Statement 2003-2008*, identifies the government's vision and main priorities for

addressing the challenges facing women in Queensland, including balancing work, family and lifestyle, economic security, and leadership. These priorities arose from state-wide consultations, the 2002 Women's Roundtable, the Ministerial Taskforce on Work and Family, and addressing important areas of inequity, under-representation and need (Queensland Government, 2003:4). A companion document, *Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008*, outlines the initiatives across government that specifically target women or have a significant benefit for women. Overall, priority is given to making improvements for women experiencing the greatest under-representation, inequity and need (ibid:13). Every two years the government will report on progress in implementing the Directions Statement. The reporting process will involve women and communities across the state and a Women's Summit every two years.

The Queensland government has created an evaluation framework across government to review programs affecting women⁴. Each department has to report on its policies and actions relating to women. There is an inter-governmental committee over-seeing the framework under a mandate that all government departments and agencies work together on women's programming and reporting (Office for Women, Queensland Government, 11 Feb, 2005 – interview).

In terms of women and employment the Queensland government has a number of programs and initiatives in place in the areas of work-family-lifestyle, employment, education and emerging industries. These are summarised below.

Work-family-life

An initiative on family-friendly workplaces is being led by the Department of Industrial Relations in partnership with the Office for Women, the Office of Public Service Merit and Equity and non-governmental stakeholders. (Queensland Government, Office for Women, 'Promoting the benefits of life balance', web-site, 2005:1).

The Queensland Industrial Relations Act (IRA) 1999 aims in part to support balancing work and family responsibilities (Queensland Government, Premier's Policy Scan, 2003:9). Along with the Queensland Family Leave Award State, the IRA 1999 provides minimum family leave entitlements for employees. The IRA also protects employees from dismissal on work and family grounds. The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 provides protection from discrimination in the work-place.

Changes to Queensland's industrial relations laws provide greater job security by giving casual employees with more than twelve months' continuous service rights to unpaid parental, adoption, carer and bereavement leaves. Such casual employees are also now covered by unfair dismissal actions in relation to family responsibilities (Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State 2003-2008 Directions Statement, 2003:6). Further, employers are obliged to inform an employee of his/her parental leave

⁴ The Office for Women in the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation, oversees the delivery of the Queensland government policies for women.

rights and provide information as to how to access it (Queensland Government, Premier's Policy Scan, 2003:9).

From July 2001 employees in the public sector became entitled to 6 weeks paid paternity, adoption and prenatal leave. Other rights include protecting the employee's position or equivalent to enable return to work after leave, continuation of service while on leave and health and safety precautions for pregnant and breast-feeding women (Queensland Government, Premier's Policy Scan, 2003:9).

As part of achieving its goal to advance the ability of families to balance work and family responsibilities the Queensland government established the Work and Family Unit in the Department of Industrial Relations in 2001. The unit has conducted joint-research with research bodies to help workplaces evaluate their work and family policies and also research on working time (Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State 2003-2008 Directions Statement, 2003:22). Information and assistance in implementing family friendly measures is provided by the Work and Family Unit to employees and employers.

The *Work and Family Best of Both Worlds* information kit is a guide for employers and employees to assist with the development of workplaces that are more family-friendly. The Queensland Work and Family Awards give formal recognition to organisations for their policies and practices that help employees achieve balance between work, family and lifestyle.

In 2001 the Queensland government committed \$4 million over three years to school-age care services to meet the National Standards for Outside School Hours Care. The *Child Care Statewide Training Strategy* provides subsidised training to staff to meet the legislative standard and remain in their chosen occupation.

Employment

The Queensland government claims to be implementing the most advanced pay equity reforms in Australia that provide equal pay for equal and comparable work for women and men workers. It initiated a major inquiry into pay equity which resulted in *Worth Valuing: A Report of the Pay Equity Inquiry* (Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State 2003-2008 Directions Statement, 2003:6; Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008, 2003:16). An *Equity Grants* program provides financial assistance for pay equity applications that could advance pay equity in traditional female industries, occupations or callings. The government is providing \$50,000 per year for three years on the basis of matching funding (Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008, 2003:16).

Through the *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* initiative, the government targets long-term unemployed women by funding community-based, not-for-profit organisations to empower and build women's skills for finding work locally. *Mature Aged Strategies* funds training, employment assistance and employer wage subsidies for people over 45, including women wanting to return to the workforce (Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008:16-17).

The *Outworkers Strategy* helps to prevent exploitation in the clothing trades, particularly for the Vietnamese community, by running education programs regarding worker rights through the Department of Industrial Relations. To help, a Vietnamese Liaison Officer was appointed in 2002.

The Office of Public Service Merit and Equity assists government agencies to meet required standards for employing women through a reporting structure, promoting best practice information and other support.

Tasmania

Women Tasmania, previously the Office of the Status of Women prior to 1990, co-ordinates women's policy and strategy development in co-operation with government departments.

The Tasmanian Government have developed the *Women and Work* policy (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, interview - March 2005). It includes the *Women's Development Program* that is designed to improve women's access to information and opportunities. Women Tasmania officers conduct information and capacity building sessions in the community in all local government regions. A skills development program is in place to assist women to re-enter the workforce (Tasmania Government, Women's Office website: Feb. 2005; Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, interview – March, 2005; Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, *Women's Development Program*, 2000:5).

The *Women's Development Grants Program* provides small grants to community services and programs that aid women. The program is aimed at women who are disadvantaged and assists women to participate in income earning activities. Working with the Department of Economic Development, Women Tasmania is providing seed funding for start-up businesses run by women. Grants are also made to Online Access Centres for women to upgrade their computer skills (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, interview - March 2005).

Women's Information Network rooms are supported with start-up kits and training for volunteers to assist women and refer them to appropriate services including TAFE.

The Tasmanian government is also focusing on programs designed to assist women to work in non-traditional areas. In 2002 a mentoring program for grade 10 female students was started in which students are paired with a mentor for a year to raise the students' awareness regarding non-traditional occupations (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, interview - March 2005).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted a survey in Tasmania on 'Balancing Work and Caring Responsibilities', commissioned by Women Tasmania. An information publication is being developed on flexible work options and family-friendly work places drawing on legislative reforms and best practice from around

Australia. (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, e-mail and interview: March, 2005).

An annual award was granted in 2004 for a best practice family-friendly workplace through the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and Business Council of Australia (BCA) National Work and Family Awards. The Tasmanian government is considering implementing its own award program to promote friendly work practices and provide assistance to employers wishing to implement such (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, e-mail and interview: March, 2005).

The Tasmanian government has set goals in relation to women in leadership and women's participation. These include 35 percent representation of women in the State Executive service and 50 percent representation of women on government boards and committees in part through the *Women on Boards* program (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, interview - March 2005; Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, *Leadership, Decision-Making and Policy*, website: March, 2005). The *Women into Local Government* program encourages women to enter local government in order to raise the representation of women at this level of government (Tasmania Government, Women Tasmania, website: March, 2005).

In 2000 the Pay Equity Wage Fixing Principle was brought down by the Tasmanian Industrial Commission. It applies to workers covered by Tasmanian state awards. The Principle means 'equal remuneration for men and women doing work of equal value' and provides for reconsideration of the value of work and the appropriate rates of pay in new and existing awards (Tasmania Government, women Tasmania, *New 'Pay Equity' Principle a Win for Women*, website: Feb, 2005).

The Tasmanian Implementation Plan for Women in VET that had been run by the Equity branch of the Department of Education and Training was dissolved in 2001. Vocational education and training for women is now mainstreamed into regular programs. The Equity branch has also been abolished and the strategy's steering committee is now a reference group that has input into the department's planning of initiatives for women. Smaller initiatives exist such as *Key Skills* focussing on helping women gain employment. The *Return to Work* program assists people return to employment (Tasmania Government, Department of Education and Training, interview – March, 2005).

Between 2002 and 2004 Equity Services delivered the 'Girls in ICT online forum' to assist in raising awareness among young women of information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool and a potential occupation. The program involves a two week online discussion forum to enable girls to connect to female role models working with ICT (Dept of Education, Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training, *Girls in ICT online forum*, website, 2005:1).

The Department of Education has established new childcare centres at primary schools for day-long care to meet growing demand for childcare in Tasmania (Tasmania Government, Department of Education, interview – March, 2005; Tasmania Government, Department of Education, website – March, 2005).

Victoria

The Victorian government adopted a strategy on women called *Forward Plan for Valuing Victoria's Women 2000-03* based on four themes from the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The strategy focuses on representation and equity; education, work and economic independence; health and well being and community strengthening, and justice and safety. These themes have been reported on annually and built on in the succeeding plan for women in Victoria called *Leading with Victoria's Women 2004-2007*. The latter plan contains a whole-of-government overview of the key achievements for women 2000-2003 (Victorian Government, *Leading With Victoria's Women 2004-2007*, 2004:6).

The *Leading With Victoria's Women 2004-2007* plan utilises a whole-of-government approach and is based on consultations with women on a range of topics. Consultation is conducted all year round including through Women's Roundtables at community Cabinet, the Annual Premier's Women's summit and other forums hosted by the Office for Women's Policy to help shape policy on women (Victorian Government, *Leading With Victoria's Women 2004-2007*, 2004:7).

The Office for Women's Policy is central to co-ordinating, monitoring and achieving government initiatives on women under the 2004-2007 plan with other government departments (Victorian Government, *Leading With Victoria's Women 2004-2007*, 2004:8). An annual progress report on the government's strategy on women according to its plans is made by the Office.

The four key themes of the 2004-2007 strategy are the same as those of the 2000-2003 plan designed to build on goals and achievements of the earlier plan. The theme of education, work and economic independence carried over from 2000-2003 focuses on older women in the workforce, equality in earnings, careers and caring, and access to education (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:4)

There are programs for women in the public sector as part of the Victorian government's goal of being a model employer. A review of the *Focus on Women Strategy* in the Department of Education shows an increase of women in leadership roles. The *Flexible Work Kit: Achieving Work-Life Balance* used in the same department has helped with retention of women in the workforce (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:6-7).

Representation and Equity

Programs addressing representation and equity issues for women in Victoria focus on leadership and business. They aim to raise the representation of women in leadership positions and improve business skills (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:4-5). The *Showcasing Women in Small Business* program started in March 2002. It provides assistance to women running businesses through financial advice, mentoring and networking (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003*, 2003:13). In 2002-2003 grants were given

for women's leadership training including women in rural areas, sports, and marine transport.

A series of forums on managing diversity in 2002-2003 focused on women in non-traditional jobs in the public sector and improvement of women's access to online technology. Other forums for women on leadership and sexual harassment issues in the work-place were also held (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003*, 2003:8-13).

In March 2004 the Victorian government announced a Pay Equity Inquiry which would report on the gender pay gap and recommend future actions. The final report to government is expected February, 2005 (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:6).

Education, Work and Economic Independence

The Victorian government implemented the *Action Agenda for Work and Family Balance* in November 2003. A report card on progress is due for publication in 2005. Under the agenda the State government will work with business, unions, employers, employees and communities. The *Better Work and Family Balance* program funds pilot projects and research focusing on part-time work (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:6). The *Flexible Work in Schools* project examined work and family balance issues in sixteen government schools and developed resources to support work and family balance. In 2002-2003 a payroll tax exemption was given to employers for up to fourteen weeks of full-time paid maternity and adoption leave (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women: 2002/2003*, 2002:13).

The government has funded return-to-work grants of \$1000 for parents for training and support leading to employment (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003*, 2002:3; Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:7). In 2003-2004 women represented around 50 percent of the unemployed people provided with fifteen full-time weeks of employment and 110 hours of accredited training under *The Jobs and Training* program. The *Youth Employment Scheme* provides wage subsidies to support traineeships and apprenticeships for young people in Victorian government departments and agencies of whom 75 percent were women (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:7).

The *Networking the Nation* project links rural and regional Adult Community Education servers to Vic One information and communication technologies infrastructure which helps women in rural communities get access to information, training and networks. Women make up 72 percent of the students enrolled in a diverse selection of education and training programs offered by the Adult Community Education programs. Under the Creative Capacity + Arts for all Victorians arts policy Arts Victoria funded \$238,000 in grants in 2003-2004 for projects with a primary or secondary focus on women (Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:7-8).

In 2003 the Victorian government introduced the *Outworkers (Improved Protection) Act* to provide increased protection for clothing industry outworkers through a regulatory system (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003*, 2002:13).

Initiatives have been introduced to encourage women to enter emerging and non-traditional industries. Through the *New Realities in 2002-2003* campaign many young women were reached in years nine and ten to consider careers in information and communication technology (Victorian Government, *Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003*, 2002:13).

In 2001 the Indigenous Women Going Places Ministerial Advisory Committee (WPG MAC) was established which developed the Strategic Plan 2002-2005 after formal and informal consultations with Victorian indigenous women. The Strategic Plan include a focus on employment, education and training (Victorian Government, *Indigenous Women Going Places Ministerial Advisory Committee Strategic Plan 2002-2005*, 2003:4,8-9,14-15).

Safety

The Victorian government has established the Women's Safety Strategy, an across-government initiative in partnership with community key stakeholders that include unions, employers, the Victoria Police, the Victorian Workcover Authority, the Equal Opportunity commission, non-government organisations, and community and women's groups. A major part the program focuses on violence against women including workplace violence, bullying and sexual harassment. There is a State-wide Steering Committee on Violence Against Women in the Workplace whose aim is to improve the understanding of workplace violence against women for better prevention and intervention strategies. A code of practice on workplace bullying and occupational violence is scheduled for development. A public progress report on Women's Safety Strategy will be published in 2005 (Victorian Government, *Acting on the Women's Safety Strategy*, 2002:5,28-29; Victorian Government, *Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004*, 2003:10).

Western Australia

In its Strategic Plan 2003-2004 the Office for Women's Policy sets developing and implementing a model for gendering impact assessment across government as one of its major goals. Other key goals are monitoring change in women's progress on an evidence-based approach, providing benchmarks and indicators for women's progress, and an annual women's Progress Report (Western Australia Government, *Office for Women's Policy Strategic Plan 2003-2004*, 2003).

The Office for Women's Policy is involved in the *Gender Impact Assessment: a new framework for producing gender-inclusive policy* Australian Research Council Linkage project with the SA Office for Women, the University of Adelaide and the University of Western Australia's Business School and the South Australian Office for Women.

The project aims to develop tools, such as gender disaggregation, to provide a gender view on all aspects of public policy and programs (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:9).

The government's document *Creating Better Opportunities for Women* makes a commitment to advancing women's role and rights in Western Australia society and is followed up on in the 2004 report, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*. The 2004 report reflects a whole of government approach that has been taken to addressing women's needs since 2001. A *Gender Analysis Project* has been implemented by the Department for Community Development's Office for Women's Policy under which five key departments are engaging in gender analysis pilot projects (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:1-3).

The Western Australian government has applied a community engagement approach through a Women's convention in 2002 and community forums in 2003 to arrive at seven key areas and goals for women identified in the *Better Opportunities for Women* report (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:3). The Office for Women's Policy with the Women's Advisory Council and Western Australia women has developed a series of indicators to measure aspects of WA women's lives. The indicators were first published in 2004 in the Women's Report Card, to be updated every year and the report distributed widely on International Women's Day (Western Australia Government, Office for Women's Policy, *Women's Report Card: Measuring Women's Progress*, 2004:2). The Women's Report Card includes measurement of women's participation in employment, business, occupational segregation, leadership representation, participation in post compulsory secondary education, carer role, and government pensions (Western Australian Government, Office for Women's Policy, *Women's Report Card: Measuring Women's Progress*, 2004:4).

Two of the key areas of focus for women's programs in Western Australia are fairness in the workplace and equal opportunity in employment. In the area of equal opportunity there are initiatives related to skills development for women in agriculture, involvement of indigenous women in the areas of leadership and economic status under the *Action Plan for Indigenous Women and Reconciliation*, improvement of women's access to apprenticeships and traineeships and encouragement of the employment of women in non-traditional trades. The State Government has an *Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005* with emphasis on indigenous Australians, people with disabilities, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, youth and women. Initiatives related to diversity in public sector agencies include job sharing, part-time work, teleworking, home-based work, facilities for nursing mothers, networks for women employees, workshops and training for women and childcare facilities. Other programs and initiatives include a career enrichment program for women working in court services, a mentoring program for women in local government in management and decision-making roles, and the appointment of women for the first time as train drivers, Port Service Officers and Harbour Masters (Western Australia Government, *Women at*

work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004, 2004:9-10).

Under the key area of fairness in the workplace the Western Australian government has introduced a number of initiatives. In March 2004 it commissioned a review of the gender pay gap in Western Australia. The report of the review which includes five main elements was tabled in state parliament November 2004 (Western Australia Government, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, *Pay Equity*, website, Feb 2005:3; Western Australia Government, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, *Review of the gender pay gap in Western Australia*, website, Feb. 2005:2).

Through the Department for Consumer and Employment Protection the Western Australian government has developed information on work and family available on its website for employers and employees. In particular, there is a 'Work and Family – Employer Information Kit'. Generally, information includes employers' legal responsibilities to be family-friendly, the benefits for an employer for being family-friendly, background information on work and family, breastfeeding at work, carer-friendly workplaces, types of family-friendly initiatives to take, home-based work, and parental leave entitlements (Western Australian Government, Department for Consumer and Employment Protection, *Work and Family*, website, Feb. 2005).

The government has been involved in two reports on women and retirement income in conjunction with the Women's Economic Policy and Analysis Unit (WEPAU) of Curtin University of Technology, one report being released 2003 and one due 2005. A research project, *Redressing the Gendered workplace Culture of Policing*, contains recommendations for training scholarships for public service women, leadership development for women at the Police Academy, more women in senior positions in the police force, and an anti-bullying working party (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:12).

Grants have been given to employer and employee organisations involved in the process to update State awards to remove discriminatory provisions, include minimum conditions such as parental and carers' leave and incorporate flexible terms of work. Other projects include reducing injuries in the female dominated areas of health and community services, a Mature Age Employment Strategy to increase employment of mature-age workers, improvement of childcare workers pay and working conditions and increasing access to childcare for women in education and the workforce, and the introduction of eight weeks paid parental leave in the State public sector from January 1 2006 (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:12-13).

Women's participation in small business is encouraged by two programs aimed at improving access to information and opportunity and providing a kit for women and men over fifty entering small business (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:13).

The government has placed emphasis on improving equity for low paid employees through the Labour Relations reform Act 2002 which amends the Industrial Relations Act 1979, the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993 and abolishes the Workplace Agreements Act 1993. There has been a substantial increase in the minimum wage, an increase to the casual loading from 15 percent to 20 percent, a new carers' leave entitlement allowing the use of up to five sick days for carer needs, the inclusion of an equal remuneration object in the Industrial Relations Act to enhance equal pay for work of equal value, and the introduction of a 'no-disadvantage test' to ensure employees in individual agreements are not disadvantaged compared to the relevant award (Western Australia Government, *Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004*, 2004:13).

Through the department of Education and Training, the Western Australian government runs two access/bridging programs into further study that also give a taste of work experience, the main target group being women wanting to return to the workforce/study. (Western Australia Government, Department of Education and Training, e-mail – 9 March, 2005).

New South Wales

The Office for Women, a unit in the Premier's Department, is responsible for strategy, policy development, programs and projects for women in New South Wales. The Office was established July 2004, its predecessor being the Department for Women. The NSW government conducts an annual audit of the status of women in NSW called the Audit of NSW Government Achievement for Women. The 2003 report focusing on 64 agencies across government dealt with the impact of more than 500 initiatives on women (NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004, 2003:7).

The *NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005* is based on the data derived from the audit and reflects commitments adopted at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on women in Beijing, 1995 '...to promote further progress on achieving Australia's commitments under the *Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*'. Further '[t]he plan recognised that age, race, ethnicity, location and social and economic circumstances all affect women's needs and options'. In general, the NSW government wants to address needs of women '...most in need of support and assistance' (NSW Government Action Plan For Women 2003-2005, 2003:1,6).

Within the Action Plan, the Department for Women developed a *Jobs for Women Strategy* in 2001 which was updated in 2003 with data from the 2002 Audit of Government Achievements for Women (NSW Government Action Plan For Women 2003-2005, 2003:100). The NSW government employment strategies for women focus on business entrepreneurship, leadership, education and training, information and communications technology, de-segregation, pay equity and anti-discrimination issues, work and family issues, unemployed women including young and mature-aged, clothing outworkers, regional, rural and remote areas' employment, aboriginal women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and occupational health and safety in female dominated sectors.

A number of government funded programs assist women in setting up and/or strengthening their businesses. Initiatives in 2002-2003 included the *Women in Business Program*, *Women in Business Regional Program* and the *Women in Small Business Project*. The latter was developed to gain information on the profile of women in small business and key issues affecting women in business.

There are a number of mentorship programs for women such as the *Women in Business Mentor Program*, the *Girl Savvy Program* funded in 2002-2003 to encourage young women's financial independence, and the *Lucy Mentoring Program* which brings young women from university business, finance, economics and accounting studies with women leaders in senior public and private positions to improve female representation in leadership (NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004, 2003:6,12-13; NSW Government Action Plan For Women 2003-2005, 2003:101).

As part of efforts designed to desegregate the workforce the government places a strong emphasis on training students and women in information and communications technology (ICT). Under the goal of skilling people for an information society, the government's New South Wales Information and Communications Technology Skills Action Plan 2001 comprises 120 programs in the private and public sectors funded by government for \$31 million, and industry for \$32, million over the period 2001- 2005. Some of the plans encourage women to move into ICT careers as an emerging and well-paid industry. Under a separate program, the Can Do funded by \$6,000, young women 15-24 years old received computer-based training opportunities. Also, information technology (IT) business awards of \$10,000 are given. In addition, \$50,000 was granted to the Summer Schools Program for stimulating interest in women's involvement in IT and technology.

To help close the gender pay gap between men and women in NSW, the NSW Industrial Relations Act in 1996 updated the previous definition of equal pay to 'equal remuneration for men and women doing work of equal or comparable value' and in 2000 made a new *Equal Remuneration and Other conditions principle* empowering unions to seek variations to awards by establishing that the rates of the award are undervalued on a gender basis. Each case is to be assessed on its merits but occupations and industries that do not have 60 percent female (or male) domination are unlikely to meet necessary criteria (NSW Department of Commerce, Office of Industrial Relations, website – Work and Family, 2005:1-2).

The Office of Industrial Relations Women's Equity Bureau role is to implement government policy on women in the workplace including pay equity, employment discrimination and work and family issues. This Bureau has annually prepared the NSW Work and Family Strategy for the NSW Work and Family Taskforce, established in 1996 to address the need '...for a co-ordinated approach across the NSW government, community services and workplace for work and family issues' to complement '...the NSW Industrial Relations Act 1996 which aims to promote industrial relations that encourage and assist co-operative workplace reform'. Guidelines provide minimum legal requirements for employers as well as how to implement family friendly work practices such as part-time work and flexible working hours. Family friendly Ideas for Small Business was produced for businesses with 3-84

employees. Based on research on good practice the guidelines include details on rostering in residential aged care to enable employees to better balance work and family responsibilities and approaches to recruitment and retention of staff and how to reduce casualisation. Research has also been undertaken into family friendly practices in the children's services sector.

A case-study approach has been taken to showcase best practice affirmative action and equal employment opportunity strategies in leading Australian organizations. These identify factors driving success, barriers and methods and indicators for evaluating progress.

The NSW Anti-Discrimination Board provides information on best practice in anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity and promoting the full participation of employees with family responsibilities in the workplace. The Board's president is empowered to intervene in cases before the Industrial Relations Court (IRC) to address systemic discrimination, e.g., in 2002 an intervention was made regarding the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of carer's responsibilities.

The NSW Public Sector has an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy to address access and opportunity for under-represented groups such as women. Strategies include recruitment programs and access to training and career development (New South Wales Government, Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, web-site, 2005:1-2).

The NSW Office of Industrial Relations' (OIR) has extensive web-site of information resources for employees and employers on equity rights in the work-place, for example, regarding, maternity, paternity and parental leaves, pay equity and non-discrimination, as part of the Office's emphasis on work and family. Examples are the Work and Family website, Guide to Pregnancy and Work and Maternity at Work, written in plain English. The government's commitment is to help NSW businesses work with employees to establish effective work and family practices' recognising that "[a]s Australian working families have moved away from the traditional model of the male breadwinner and the female homemaker toward two income families organisations and individuals have to grapple with the tensions and conflict that may arise while trying to fulfil the dual role of wage earner and family carer (NSW Department of Commerce, Office of Industrial Relations 2005:1 – Work and Family).

Adoption Leave has been extended to children under eighteen years old and superannuation contributions have been made compulsory for maternity, adoption, parental and paternity leave. Personal carers' leave is also a legal entitlement for employees covered by NSW awards. An employee uses sick leave for such leave.

The 1996 NSW Industrial Relations Act provides for Part-time Work Agreements authorising employees and employers to over-ride awards and enterprise agreements if restrictions exist. Such agreements may contain an employee's right to return to full time work and all full-time benefits are pro-rated (NSW Department of Commerce, Office of Industrial Relations, 2005:1-3).

The NSW Working Women's Centre is funded by the State government to disseminate information, undertake advocacy and assist with the prevention of discrimination in the workplace.

The NSW government established a \$4 million dollar, three year strategy, *Behind the Label*, in 2001 to address inequities in the female dominated sector of clothing outworkers. There are five key elements in the strategy including education and retraining for outworkers and a Clothing Outworker Hotline staffed by the Office for Industrial Relations (OIR).

The OIR targets occupational health and safety information and training to female dominated industries. This includes manual handling for nurses, hairdressers and nail technicians, accommodation and hospitality industry-housekeepers, childcare centres, call centres, and contract cleaning.

The Corporate Partners for Change program between government, industry, unions and the community helps unemployed people in Western Sydney make the transition to employment. The program is youth-focussed as well as creating skilled jobs and career paths for women returning to the workforce.

Additionally, to further women's equal access to resources and employment there are the Main street – Small Towns Program, Town and Village Futures Program and CTC@NSW Program receiving \$16.75 million for small rural communities to access information technology.

In 2002 the NSW government established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Unit within the NSW Department for Women to support the role Aboriginal women play in their families and communities and their indigenous status. The micro-enterprise development (MED) approach is being piloted with an Aboriginal group of women in the Redfern community. *Options for Women in the West* has assisted Aboriginal women with training in vacation and outside-of-school-hours care. The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program* for the NSW Public Sector to provide equal access to public sector employment for Aboriginal women. Employment strategies in NSW target women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. A small business training program has been established for Arabic-speaking young people and women. Under the *Migrant Career Development Program* existing under the NSW Government's Migrant Skills Strategy around 52 percent of those assisted were women.

Other State Government initiatives related to women and employment include a program focusing on women and agriculture in association with the Rural Women's Network and the *Traineeships for People with a Disability program* which includes women with a disability, and funding/grants for women in the arts.

Education and Training

The NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005 includes initiatives addressing equity for women in education and training. In this context the State

government supports the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which calls for the "... elimination of discrimination in education and access and equity for women in relation to career and vocational guidance, the same curricula for women and men across all subject areas, the same quality of education as men and non-sex stereotyped teaching methods, learning materials and resources.

The NSW government has a Gender Equity Unit in the Dept of Education and Training (NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003 - 2005, 2003:190). The education and training strategies and programs of the government aim at increasing women's participation in education and training at all levels including for women at risk, women with disabilities, aboriginal women, women of cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women in rural and remote areas, and reducing women's under-representation in certain education and employment areas. The following is a range of NSW government programs/initiatives in education and training that aim to assist women.

The NSW government has engaged in multi-partner initiatives such as *Digi-girls* and *EXITE* to improve primary and high school female student's training in IT. The *Explore Your Future* program encourages women and high school girls to explore non-traditional training and career pathways. Programs exist to increase the number of women in apprenticeships and traineeships and to encourage women, including female high school students to enter skills shortage areas such as automotive trades.

Gender inclusive teaching resources have been developed including gender sensitive instructor training to remove stereotyping of women in education and training resources and instructing. Initiatives have been made to address the under-representation of women, eg, young women, in vocational education and training courses through programs in high schools, and in using advertising to move young women from typically training for low paid jobs, encouraging a more diverse range of employment interests.

Funds were allocated in 2003 to support partnerships in Adult and Community Education (ACE) to provide vocational education and training for mature age job-seekers, part-time workers receiving income support and people in need of retraining. The approach encourages the development of local educational pathways and improving local organisational relationships. The program comprises *Life Experience Counts* (LEC) courses to recognise past work experience, unpaid or paid, vocational education and training taster courses, and professional development training for facilitators of courses.

Strategies have been developed to improve women students' access, participation and outcomes in TAFE NSW. Women-only courses at Certificate II level are aimed at increasing access to vocational education and training and assist women students in developing skills and confidence needed to enter or re-enter the workforce or gain further education. TAFE courses have been developed to specifically assist women complete IT training through to Certificate IV and gain employment in IT.

One program trains displaced and remaining workers in the textile, leather and footwear industry to gain new employment or keep employment as the industry changes. Most of the employees are women and half are culturally and linguistically diverse women.

Other programs exist to help young women who are disadvantaged, at risk or young mothers re-engage in education and training. Certain programs are designed to make the learning environment safe for women.

There are programs designed to provide recognition of prior learning (RPL), whether formally or informally acquired, particularly for women experiencing multiple disadvantage, eg, rural women in agriculture/family farms. An initiative to provide vocational education and training pathways for women with overseas qualifications has also been established.

Conclusion

This review of initiatives indicates that there are no overarching women's employment policies or strategies in the Australian States and the Northern Territory. Despite this a wide range of policy/program/strategy initiatives related to women's employment do exist in Australia. These fall into the following categories:

- women in leadership
- pay equity
- work, family and life
- mentoring
- women in business
- women of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- indigenous women
- women with a disability
- education and training
- public sector employment
- workplace safety
- women in remote, rural and regional areas
- across-government approach
- women in non-traditional occupations
- women and communications and information technology.

A summary of the initiatives reviewed in this section using the categories above is contained in Appendix A.

6. Towards a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy

This section of the report outlines a number of steps to help guide the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy for South Australia.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that a five year WES be developed. The Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would be updated each year to respond to changing economic and labour market conditions. It would reflect Australia's commitments to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on women in Beijing, 1995.

While some progress has been made in South Australia towards the development of gender sensitive employment policies, strategies and programs there is considerable policy fragmentation due to the lack of an overarching Women's Employment Strategy. The development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy using gender mainstreaming tools would enable a whole of government approach to Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy development and evaluation in the context of *South Australia's Strategic Plan*. The Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would inform and be informed by *Prosperity through People*, the *State Infrastructure Plan*, the *SA Works Program* and the *Better Skills, Better Work, Better State* strategy. At a broader level the Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would be part of a whole of government strategy of gender mainstreaming designed to inform the development of gender sensitive policy and budget resource allocation.

A Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would provide a framework to guide the actions and engage government departments/agencies, business/employers, unions, employees, education and training bodies and other stakeholders in the community.

The development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy provides a focal point for the development of a more gender inclusive whole of government strategy in South Australia. The Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy would be informed by an examination of women's employment trends, an audit of initiatives influencing women's employment, identification of best practice approaches from interstate and overseas and consultations with key stakeholders.

The review of trends undertaken in the Part 1 of this report and the review of women's employment initiatives in this report reveal a range of strategic challenges that a South Australian Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy should address. These include:

- Increasing women's labour market participation, particularly in the context of the ageing of the workforce;
- Increasing the number and proportion of women in secure rather than precarious forms of employment;
- Reducing occupational and industry gender segregation;
- Eliminating gender streaming in education and training;
- Eliminating discrimination in employment on the basis of sex;
- Increasing workplace safety for women;
- Increasing the representation of women in management and senior positions;
- Eliminating gender pay gaps;
- Addressing gender inequities arising for women from individual workplace agreements;
- Improving opportunities and providing greater security for women in the public sector;
- Tackling and overcoming gender inequities in the division of labour in the household;
- Increasing the availability of affordable childcare and elderly care to support women's labour force participation;
- Reforming the retirement incomes system to ensure that women's retirement incomes are at least as favourable as those of men.

Drawing from local and overseas experience a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy should address a wide range of issues related to women and employment, utilising a multi-agency approach. Key areas of focus would include:

- gender mainstreaming in employment and industry development
- gender mainstreaming, employment and the budget
- gender sensitive employment indicators and performance measurement
- women in leadership roles
- pay equity
- work, family and life
- women and precarious employment
- women in business
- women of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- indigenous women and work
- women with a disability and work
- young women and work
- women in remote, rural and regional areas
- women and education and training
- women and retirement incomes
- public sector employment
- workplace safety and women
- gender segregation in employment
- women in non-traditional occupations

The following broad recommendations are made to help lay the foundations for the development and successful implementation of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia.

Whole-of-government approach

Given the range of policy areas that influence women's employment it is vital that a whole of government approach to the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy be utilised. This approach to strategy development has been employed in a number of areas by the New South Wales, Queensland and Victorian governments. It is also consistent with the approach taken by the EU in the context of the European Employment Strategy.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that the processes used to develop a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy should emulate the whole of government approach taken to develop the *South Australia's Strategic Plan* and other key strategies.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the strategy be viewed as a multi-government department/agency responsibility which is co-ordinated by the Office For Women with a steering group which includes representation from at least the Department of Trade and Economic Development, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Department of Education; Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment; Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA and the Social Inclusion Unit. Representation should also be sought from the Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Local Government organisations.

Audit of Initiatives

This report has undertaken a preliminary review of initiatives related to women's employment in South Australia. A more comprehensive scan and audit of current initiatives and policy/strategy options is necessary to inform the development of a Women's Employment Strategy.

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that the work done in this study be the basis for a comprehensive whole of government audit of the impact of existing policies, programs and initiatives on women's employment be undertaken and that this be the basis for an annual audit across government departments and agencies regarding the impact of initiatives on women and employment. This audit could be undertaken as part of a wider audit of government initiatives and their impact on women like those undertaken in NSW and Western Australia which produces the Women's Report Card. The results of such an audit could also be a regular

component of agency annual reports or a gender responsive budget assessment if such an initiative were introduced.

State-wide consultation

A key part of an audit of government initiatives as well the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy is consultation with stakeholders.

Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that government engage in a consultative process with women across the state to establish priorities regarding women and employment. An annual employment consultative forum could be a key component of an ongoing consultative process.

Women at Work Unit

The development and implementation of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy should be informed by high quality research and policy development linking the public service with the wider university research sector.

Recommendation 6:

It is recommended that the State government establish a Women at Work Unit to provide research and policy development support for the development and implementation of a Women's Employment Strategy. The bureau would employ a whole of government approach to research and policy development related to key issues including gender mainstreaming in employment, gender impact assessment and women's employment; pay equity, gender labour market segregation and work-life balance. The unit should be established in collaboration with the university sector and involve an exchange of expertise between the sectors.

Gender Mainstreaming

The concept of gender mainstreaming should be applied to the development and implementation of a Women's Employment Strategy. This would involve the development and application of gender sensitive women's employment policies and strategies across portfolio areas and institutional boundaries. Gender mainstreaming occurs at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages to inform the development or modification of policy, programs and other initiatives. Gender mainstreaming is an integral component of the European Employment Strategy. A broader discussion of gender mainstreaming can be found in the *Gender Data Online* report prepared for the Office for Women (Spoehr et al, 2004:23-25). In order to sustain the link between policy and resource allocation, gender responsive budget initiatives have emerged as an important gender mainstreaming strategy.

Recommendation 7:

It is recommended that the State Government apply the concept of gender mainstreaming to the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy for South Australia that includes processes for developing a gender responsive budget.

Gender Impact Assessment

An important tool to support gender mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy is Gender Impact Assessment (GIA). GIA is a seven stage methodology, or evaluation framework, enabling governments to assess the gender impact of policy and programs across government and use the knowledge gained from this to develop gender sensitive policies, strategies, programs and budgets. The seven stages of GIA are summarised below.

- Stage 1: Initial starting point - assesses a policy in terms of four dimensions including participation, resources, norms and values, and rights, in order to determine the degree of gender inequality and thus the priority that needs to be given to formulating, monitoring and developing measures.
- Stage 2: Direction of trends - emphasises the need to consider a policy in terms of a dynamic context before implementation, to inform judgements about the impact of policy measures.
- Stage 3: Priority to gender equality – requires an assessment of the priority given by the measure to gender equality, for example, in light of the stated or un-stated equity goals, resources committed.
- Stage 4: Impact on gender equality - assesses a program in relation to participation, resources, norms and values, and rights.
- Stage 5: Effects on specific groups - examines the effect of a policy on various groups to reveal different types of advantage or disadvantage, for example, hidden impacts, exclusions.
- Stage 6: Indirect effects - requires examining the unintended impact, both positive and negative, on gender relations outside of the place of employment.
- Stage 7: Modifications to policies - acknowledges that changes have been made to policies because of greater information or political pressure and also makes suggestions for further modifications to policy measures (EGGE 2000:87-101).

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that GIA be adopted to support the application of gender mainstreaming in the development of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia.

Recommendation 10:

It is recommended that existing policies and programs relating to women's employment in South Australia be subject to GIA.

Indicators

The development and evaluation of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy requires the selection and application of appropriate gender sensitive indicators. A range of employment indicators are being developed in the context of the *Gender Data Online* project. These could form the basis of a suite of

indicators designed to inform the development and monitoring of a Women's Employment Strategy.

Recommendation 11:

It is recommended that a suite of indicators be developed to help inform the development and monitoring of a Women's Employment and Workforce Development Strategy in South Australia. The choice of indicators should be informed by EU commissioned gender analysis of the adequacy of indicators used to monitor the gender impact of the European Employment Strategy.

Recommendation 12:

At the level of employment program development and monitoring it is recommended that a system of gender sensitive program performance monitoring and reporting be established.

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8. Appendix A: Index of Dissimilarity

Index of Dissimilarity (ID) is according to Blackburn et al. (1993) defined as follows:

$$ID = \frac{1}{2} \sum_i \left| \frac{M_i}{M} - \frac{F_i}{F} \right|$$

The ID equation can be re-written as follows:

$$ID = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i \frac{1}{2} * \left| M_i * \frac{N}{M} - F_i * \frac{N}{F} \right|$$

If the female and male share of employment is equal, then $\frac{N}{M} = \frac{N}{F} = 2$ and

$$ID = \frac{1}{F} \sum_i \frac{1}{2} * |M_i - F_i| \text{ and similar } ID = \frac{1}{M} \sum_i \frac{1}{2} * |M_i - F_i|$$

where

- M – represents the total number of males in employment
- M_i – the number of males in category i
- F – total number of females in employment
- F_i – the number of females in category i

In the special case, where women's share of employment equals that of men's, the ID index can be interpreted as the proportion of women (or men) who would have to change job to remove segregation.

9. Appendix B: State and Territory Initiatives

WOMEN'S STRATEGY, EVALUATION & INDICATORS

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Audit of NSW Government Achievement for Women - annual audit of women's status across government.	<i>NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004.</i>
	NSW Government Action Plan for Women – based on data from audit & reflects UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.	<i>NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.</i>
	Jobs for Women strategy within Action Plan set up 2001.	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Gov't document contains vision & main priorities for addressing challenges facing women in Q'ld. Priorities came from state-wide consultations, 2002 Women's Roundtable, & Ministerial Taskforce on Work and Family & other identified areas of inequity, under-representation.	<i>Queensland Government, Women in the Smart State: Directions Statement 2003-2008.</i>
	Every 2 years gov't to report on progress in implementing the <i>Directions Statement</i>	
	<i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> contains initiatives across government that specifically target women or have a significant benefit for women. Emphasis is on making improvements for women experiencing the greatest under-representation, inequity & need.	Queensland Government, Office for Women, 11 Feb., 2005: interview.
	Evaluation framework across gov't to review programs affecting women – each department has to report on its policies & actions relating to women. An inter-governmental committee over-see framework under a mandate that all government departments & agencies work together on women's programming & reporting.	
	The Office for Women oversees the delivery of the Queensland gov't policies for women.	

South Australia	Office assists government agencies consider women's needs when developing policies & programs; developing gender based analysis, self-assessment audit tool. Draft policy framework to be developed to pilot.	Government of South Australia, Office for Women, website: Feb. 2005.
Tasmania	Women Tasmania (previously Status of Women) co-ordinates with other gov't dep'ts regarding women's concerns on an issue-by-issue basis.	Government of Tasmania, interviews: March, 2005.
Victoria	Forward Plan for Valuing Victoria's Women 2000-03, <i>Victoria government strategy on women based on 4 themes from the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women of representation & equity, education, work & economic independence, health & well being & community strengthening, & justice & safety.</i>	Government of Victoria, <i>Leading With Victoria's Women 2004-2007.</i>
	<i>These themes reported on annually & built on in the succeeding plan for women called Leading with Victoria's Women 2004-2007 which contains a whole-of-government picture of key achievements for women 2000-2003. Achievements are now measured according to 2004-2007 plan.</i>	
	<i>Leading with Victoria's Women 2004-2007 Plan utilises whole-of-government approach & based on consultation all year round with women & their communities through Women's roundtables at community Cabinet, the Annual Premier's Women's summit etc.</i>	
	Office for Women's Policy is central to co-ordinating, monitoring & achieving government initiatives on women under 2004-2007 plan with other gov't dept's. Annual progress report on gov't strategy on women.	
Western Australia	Office for Women's Policy has Strategic Plan 2003-2004 that includes developing & implementing gendering impact assessment model across government and goals to monitor change in women's progress on evidence-based approach, provide benchmarks & indicators & an annual women's Progress Report.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Office for Women's Policy Strategic Plan 2003-2004</i> , Office for Women's Policy website: Feb., 2005.
	Gov't document, <i>Creating Better Opportunities for Women</i> , made commitment to advancing women's role & rights which were reported on in <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> .	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.

	Whole-of-government approach in addressing women's needs taken since 2001.	
	Gender Analysis Project implemented in 5 key dep'ts.	
	Community engagement through a women's convention and community forums to arrive at key areas of goals for women, identified in <i>Better Opportunities for Women</i> .	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women's Report Card</i> , 2004.
	Series of indicators developed to measure aspects of women's lives.	
	Women's Report Card first published indicators 2004, to be updated yearly.	

SPECIFIC GROUPS – CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE WOMEN

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Small business training for Arabic-speaking youth & women.	NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004.
	Migrant Career Development Program within the NSW Government's Migrant Skills Strategy assists many women.	
	Retrain displaced & remaining workers in textile, leather & footwear industry, most of whom are culturally & linguistically diverse women.	
	Initiative to provide vocational education & training pathways for women with overseas qualifications.	
Northern Territory	Employment & training initiative for long-term unemployed migrant people including women to get employment.	Northern Territory Government, Department of Employment, Education and Training, <i>Training the Territory</i> , Feb. 2005 & interview: March, 2005.
Queensland	Outworkers Strategy in the Dep't of Industrial relations helps to prevent exploitation in the clothing trades, particularly for the Vietnamese community with education programs on worker rights. Vietnamese officer appointed to assist.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
South Australia		
Tasmania		
Victoria		
Western Australia	Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 includes an emphasis on people from culturally diverse backgrounds.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.

CARE

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Work & Family website guidelines, based on best practice research, on rostering in residential aged care to improve work & family juggle, improve recruiting and retention of staff & reduce casualisation.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005
	Research into family friendly practices in children's services sector	
Northern Territory		
Queensland		
South Australia		
Tasmania		
Victoria		
Western Australia		

SPECIFIC GROUPS – WOMEN WITH A DISABILITY

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	NSW Traineeships for People with a Disability assists women with a disability regarding employment.	NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004
Northern Territory		
Queensland		
South Australia		
Tasmania		
Victoria		
Western Australia	Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 includes an emphasis on people with disabilities.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
NSW	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005 includes initiatives addressing equity for women within education & training that will also lead to equity for women in employment.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005
	Gender Equity Unit in Dept of Education and Training.	
	Digi-girls & Exite to improve primary & high school female student's training in IT.	
	Explore Your Future encourages women & high school girls to explore non-traditional training & career pathways.	
	Programs to increase number of women in apprenticeships, traineeships.	
	Program to encourage women & high school students to enter skills shortage areas such as automative trades.	
	Gender-inclusive teaching resources, gender sensitive instructor training to remove stereotyping of women in education, training resources & instructing.	
	Initiatives to address under-representation of women in vocational education & training courses through programs in high schools & using advertising to move young women training for low paid jobs.	
	TAFE Women-only courses at Certificate II level to increase access to vocational education & training & assist women students in developing skills & confidence to enter or re-enter workforce or gain further education.	
	TAFE courses to assist women complete IT training to Certificate IV & gain employment in IT.	
	Funds to ACE for vocational education & training for mature-age job seekers, part-time workers receiving income support & people in need of retraining – encourages local-appropriate educational pathways, includes Life Experience Counts courses to recognise unpaid or paid past work experience, vocational education & training taster courses & professional development training for course facilitators.	
	Programs help young women who are disadvantaged, at risk or young mothers re-engage in education & training.	
	Programs for recognition of formal and informal prior learning particularly for women with multiple disadvantages.	

Northern Territory	Under 'Breaking Down Barriers' of Action Agenda of Workplace Employment and Training Strategy 2003-2005 study grants given each year to help women get back into the workforce.	Northern Territory Government, Department of Employment, Education and Training, <i>Training the Territory</i> , Feb. 2005.
Queensland	WOW (Wider Opportunities for Women) website provides information on vocational education & training & announces successes of women in training & the workplace to enhance perceptions of vocational training & encourage hiring of women in non-traditional occupations.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
	Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy encourages schools to help pregnant & parenting students to finish their secondary schooling through flexible arrangements.	
	Planning your Career, Back to Work & Learning Network Queensland initiatives give free training to women to obtain skills, confidence & self-esteem for re-entering workforce or continuing training.	
	TAFE Certificate in Workplace Preparation and Practices help students broaden their employment options.	
	Other TAFE programs specifically for women re-entering workforce. Post Release employment Assistance helps female offenders become 'work ready' for after release from prison.	
South Australia		
Tasmania	Key Skills initiative helps women gain employment.	Government of Tasmania, Department Education and Training, interview: March, 2005.
	Return to Work program assists people, including women, to return to employment.	
Victoria	Women make up 72% students enrolled in diverse selection of education & training programs offered by ACE	
Western Australia	Initiative to improve women's access to apprenticeships & traineeships & encourage employment of women in non-traditional trades.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.
	2 access/bridging programs into further study to give taste of work experience, main target being women returning to workforce/study. One program run at many TAFE colleges & other providers.	Government of Western Australia, Department of Education and training, e-mail: 9 March, 2005.

SPECIFIC GROUPS – INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Unit in NSW Dept for Women to support role aboriginal women play in families & communities & their indigenous status.	NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004
	Micro-enterprise development (MED) test-run with aboriginal group of women in developing an enterprise in Redfern community.	
	Options for Women in the West assisted aboriginal women being trained in vacation & outside-of-school-hours care.	
Northern Territory	Indigenous women's development program being developed for indigenous women in NT public service.	Northern Territory Government, <i>Women in Leadership and Management</i> , 2004.
Queensland		
South Australia	In SA Draft Action Plan to be developed for aboriginal women, women & economic status to be one of main issues.	Government of South Australia, Office for Women, website: Feb. 2005.
	Office for Women working towards establishing bridging course to assist Aboriginal Education Workers enter full teacher training.	
Tasmania		
Victoria	Indigenous Women Going Places Ministerial Advisory Committee established the strategic Plan 2002-2005 after formal & informal consultations with Victorian indigenous women which includes employment & education & training.	Government of Victoria, <i>Indigenous Women Going Places Ministerial Advisory Committee Strategic Plan 2002-2005</i> .
Western Australia	Action Plan for Indigenous Women and Reconciliation involves indigenous women in leadership & economic status.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.
	Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 includes an emphasis on indigenous Australians.	

SPECIFIC GROUPS – MATURE-AGED WOMEN

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Funds to partnerships in ACE vocational education & training for mature-age job-seekers.	NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Mature Aged Strategies funds training, employment assistance & employer wage subsidies for people over 45, including women wanting to return to the workforce.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
South Australia	Employment 40 Plus Program for mature-age people 40 and over currently unemployed or underemployed to take training and/or re-enter labour market.	Government of South Australia, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, <i>Employment 40 Plus Program</i> , website: 2005.
	Parents Return to Work Program aimed at parents 40 and over with children over 12 years wanting to return to workforce.	Government of South Australia, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, <i>Parents Return to Work Program</i> , website & interview, Feb. 2005.
Tasmania		
Victoria		
Western Australia	Mature Age Employment Strategy to increase employment of mature-age workers.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.
	Kit for women & men over fifty entering small business.	

PAY, INCOME & RETIREMENT INCOME

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	2000 Equal Remuneration and Other conditions principle enables unions to seek variations to awards by establishing that the pay rates are undervalued on gender basis.	NSW Dept of Commerce, Office of Industrial Relations web-site.
	Women's Equity Bureau in Office of Industrial Relations – to implement gov't policy on women in the workplace including , pay equity, employment discrimination & work & family issues.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.
	Superannuation contributions compulsory for maternity, adoption, parental and paternity leave.	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Equal pay for equal and comparable work.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State 2003-2008: Directions Statement</i> ; Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
	Equity Grants program provides financial assistance for pay equity applications with gov't providing matching funding of \$50,000 per year for 3 years.	
South Australia	Fair Work Act 2005 provides for improving minimum wage & working conditions including carer & bereavement leaves, equal pay for work of comparable value, protections for contractors and outworkers.	Government of South Australia,
Tasmania	Pay Equity Wage Fixing Principle provides for reconsideration of the value of work and the appropriate rates of pay in new and existing state awards based on 'equal remuneration for men and women doing work of equal value'.	Government of Tasmania, Women Tasmania, <i>New 'Pay Equity' Principle a Win for Women</i> . Website: Feb. 2005.
Victoria	Pay Equity Enquiry to report on gender pay gap and recommend future actions. Final report to gov't due Feb. 2005.	Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i> .
Western Australia	Gender pay gap review tabled in parliament Nov. 2004.	Government of Western Australia, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, <i>Pay Equity, & Review of the gender pay gap in Western Australia</i> , website: Feb. 2005.
	2 joint reports on women & retirement income with Curtin University of Technology.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004, 2004</i> .

	Project to improve childcare workers pay & working conditions.	
	Labour Relations Reform Act to improve equity for low paid employees – increase in minimum wage & casual loading, new carer’s leave entitlement allowing use of up to 5 sick days, equal remuneration object in Industrial Relations Act, ‘no –disadvantage test’ for individual agreements.	

PUBLIC SECTOR

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Equal Employment Opportunity policy in NSW Public Sector to address access & opportunity for under-represented groups such as women, with strategies that include recruitment programs & access to training & career development.	NSW Government, Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment website.
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program in NSW Public Sector to provide equal access to public sector employment for aboriginal women.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.
	Women in Building Award – for aboriginal building in construction industry.	
Northern Territory	Discovery – Women as Leaders program develops leadership capabilities & personal effectiveness skills and other programs provide professional development opportunities to increase women in leadership role in public sector.	Northern Territory Government, <i>Women in Leadership and Management</i> , 2004.
	Jan. 2005 cabinet accepted policy paper for further improvement for women in management in public service. Work-life strategy in public service with pilot programs in several agencies.	Northern Territory Government, Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment, e-mail: March, 2005.
Queensland	Employees entitled to paid paternity, adoption & prenatal leave.	Queensland Government, <i>Premier's Policy Scan</i> . Source - check
	Is protection of employee's position or equivalent for returning to work after the leave, continuation of service while on leave, & health & safety precautions for pregnant & breast-feeding women.	
	Office of Public Service Merit and Equity assists gov't agencies meet required standards for employing women through a reporting structure, promoting best practice information & other support.	
South Australia	Several initiatives regarding women in leadership in government to achieve 50% representation on gov't boards and committees. Women's register established, Executive searches for qualified women.	Government of South Australia, Office for Women, website: Feb. 2005.
Tasmania	Flexible work options in State Service on website of Dep't of Industrial Relations & State Service Management.	Government of Tasmania, women Tasmania, e-mail & interview: March, 2005.

Victoria	<p>Programs for Government of Victoria's goal to be model employer.</p> <p>Review of Focus on Women Strategy in the Department of Education shows increase of women in leadership roles.</p> <p>Flexible Work Kit: Achieving Work-Life Balance was used in the Department of Education which helped with retention of women. Managing Diversity series of forums gave a focus on women in non-traditional jobs in public sector.</p> <p>Youth Employment Scheme provides wage subsidies to support traineeships & apprenticeships for young people (75% women) in Victorian government departments & agencies.</p>	<p>Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i>.</p> <p>Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003</i>.</p> <p>Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i></p>
Western Australia	<p>Initiatives to reflect diversity in public sector agencies include flexible, work arrangements, networks for women employees, workshops, mentoring & training for women & childcare facilities.</p> <p>Appointing women for first time to male-exclusive public sector positions.</p>	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.
	<p>Research project, <i>Redressing the Gendered Workplace Culture of Policing</i>, has recommendations training scholarships, more women in senior police force positions & anti-bullying working party.</p>	
	<p>Introduction of paid parental leave in State public sector, rising to 8 weeks 1 Jan. 2006.</p>	

SPECIFIC GROUPS – WOMEN IN REGIONAL, RURAL & REMOTE AREAS

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Women in Business Regional Program.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.
	NSW Agriculture's Rural Women's Network assists women in agriculture regarding employment.	
	Access information technology training.	
	Main Street–Small Towns Program, Town and Village Futures Program & CTC@NSW Program increase women's access to resources, IT & employment.	
	.Recognition of prior learning.	
	Training for women in rural & remote areas in community services.	
	Programs for recognition of formal and informal prior learning for rural women in agriculture/family farms.	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Regional Women in Business workshops teach communication for women in workplace.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
South Australia		
Tasmania		
	Grants for leadership training including women in rural areas, sports & marine transport.	Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003</i> . Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i> .
	Networking the Nation project links rural & regional Adult Community Education servers to Vic One information & communications technologies infrastructure helping women in rural communities get access to information, training & networks.	
Western Australia	Initiatives for women in agriculture to develop skills.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004, 2004</i> .

SAFETY

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	Occupation health & safety information & training for predominate female industries such as nursing (manual handling), hairdressers & nail technicians, accommodation & industry-housekeepers, childcare centres, call centres & contract cleaning.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005

	Programs to make learning environment safe for women.	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Workplace Bullying Taskforce. Dep't of Industrial Relations allocated \$0.1mill. to strategies to help reduce workplace harassment.	Queensland Government, <i>State Budget 2002-03 Department of Industrial Relations.</i>
South Australia	Women's Safety Strategy	
Victoria	Forums held for women to discuss leadership & sexual harassment issues in the work-place.	Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003.</i>
	Women's Safety Strategy , an across-government initiative in partnership with community key stakeholders including unions, employers, Victoria Police, Victorian Workcover Authority, Equal Opportunity Commission, non-government organisations, & community & women's groups. A major part of the program focuses on workplace violence against women including workplace violence, bullying & sexual harassment.	Government of Victoria, <i>Acting on the Women's Safety Strategy.</i> Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004.</i>
	State-wide Steering Committee on Violence Against Women in the Workplace aims to improve understanding of workplace violence against women for better prevention & intervention strategies.	
	Code of practice on workplace bullying & occupational violence to be developed 2002-2003.	
	A public progress report on Women's Safety Strategy to be published in 2005.	
Western Australia	Project to reduce injuries in female dominated area of health & community services.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004, 2004.</i>

SEGREGATION – OCCUPATIONAL, SECTORAL, LEADERSHIP

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
NSW	Lucy Mentoring Program brings young women from university business, finance, economics & accounting studies with women leaders in senior public & private positions.	<i>NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.</i> <i>NSW Department for Women Annual Report 2003/2004</i>
	NSW Information and Communications Technology Skills Action Plan, funded by govt & industry, for training in private & public sectors for 2001-5: some of the plans encourage women to move into ICT careers as emerging & well-paid industry.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.
	Can Do 15-24 year old young women receive computer-based training. Summer Schools Program received grant to stimulate women's interest in IT & technology	
	Affirmative action & equal employment case-study research of leading organisations re. factors for success, barriers & indicators for evaluating.	
	Funding/grants for women in the arts.	
	Behind the Label: 3-year strategy to address inequities in female-dominated sector of clothing outworkers including education & retraining & Clothing Outworker Hotline staffed by Office of Industrial Relations.	
Northern Territory	Office of Women's Policy, initiates, co-ordinates, implements & reports on whole-of-government responses to priorities for women.	
Queensland	WOW (Wider Opportunities for Women) website provides information on vocational education & training & announces successes of women in training & the workplace to enhance perceptions of vocational training & encourage hiring of women in non-traditional occupations.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008.</i>
	Female Offenders Vocation Education and training helps female offenders to gain vocational education & training in non-traditional areas under more than 30 fully accredited certificate & diploma training programs.	
	Smart Women – Smart Sate strategy encourages training & employment in emerging industries, particularly, science, engineering & technology industries.	Queensland Government, Office for Women, <i>Emerging Industries</i> website.

	Innovation, Excellence and Improvement Program provides up to \$50,000 in grants to state schools for special information & communications technology projects for under-represented groups such as girls and indigenous students.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
	IT & T Careers Stuff, Smart Future, Girls With IT website and 2003 Building Youth Technology Excellence (BYTE) Awards encourage young women to seek a carer in ICT.	
	Diploma of Multimedia for Women encourages more women to enter the rapidly growing field in multi-media.	
South Australia		
Tasmania	Grants to Online Access Centres for women to upgrade computer skills. Joint government committee including Women Tasmania is working on strategy to get women into non-traditional work areas.	Government of Tasmania, Women Tasmania, interview: March, 2005.
	Mentoring program for grade 10 female students to raise awareness regarding non-traditional occupations.	
	Women on Board program to help reach gov't goals of 35% representation of women in State Executive service & 50% representation on gov't boards & committees.	Women Tasmania, interview: March, 2005; Women Tasmania, <i>Leadership, Decision-Making and Policy</i> , website: March, 2005.
	Women into Local Government encourages women to enter local government.	Women Tasmania, interview: March, 2005.
	'Girls in ICT online forum' assisted in raising awareness in young women regarding ICT as a tool & occupation	Government of Tasmania, Department of Education, Office of Post-Compulsory Education and training, <i>Girls in ICT online forum</i> , website.

Victoria	<p>Showcasing Women in Small Business to help female small business operators in finance, mentoring & networking. Grants for leadership training including women in rural areas, sports & marine transport. Connecting Victoria Strategy for improving women's access to online technology. Under Creative Capacity + Arts for all Victorians arts policy grants went to projects with a primary or secondary focus on women. Outworkers (Improved Protection) Act provides increased protection for clothing industry outworkers through a regulatory system. Through New Realities campaign many young women in high school years 9 & 10 were reached to consider careers in information & communication technology.</p>	<p>Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002?2003</i>.</p> <p>Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i>. Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002?2003</i>.</p>
Western Australia	<p>Initiative to improve women's access to apprenticeships & traineeships & encourage employment of women in non-traditional trades.</p>	<p>Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004, 2004</i>.</p>

UNEMPLOYMENT & UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Juris-diction	Initiative	Source
NSW	Women in business programs funded for setting up and strengthening businesses.	NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.
	Women in Business Mentor Program.	
	Girl Savvy Program – mentors young women in financial independence	
	NSW Working women’s Centre \$100,000 grant from Office for Women for disseminating information, advocacy & preventing discrimination in the workplace – conduct seminars/information sessions tailored to particular groups.	
	Employment type skills projects.	
	Corporate Partners for Change between gov’t, industry, unions & community helped unemployed make transition into workforce – youth-focussed & creates skilled jobs & career paths for women returning to workforce.	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	Breaking the Unemployment Cycle targets long-term unemployed women by funding community-based, not-for-profit organisations to empower & build women’s skills for finding work locally.	Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State Services Directory 2003-2008</i> .
	Mentoring for Growth brings women developing a business with successful entrepreneurs & advice panels. Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) to support women in business.	
South Australia	Employment Assistance Program helps job seekers experiencing barriers in finding employment.	Government of South Australia, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, <i>Employment Assistance Program</i> , website: 2005.
	Integration of childcare facilities for children from birth to 8 years at Sturt Street Community school.	
	Childcare scholarships established to cover up to 2/3 of cost of Diploma in Community Services.	

Tasmania	Women and Work is one of the major policies of the Tasmania gov't that includes Women's Development Program which aims to improve women's access to information & opportunities.	Government of Tasmania, Women's Office website, Feb. 2005; Women Tasmania, interview: March, 2005; Women Tasmania, <i>Women's Development Program</i> .
	Women's Development Grants Program assist more disadvantaged women moving into income earning.	Government of Tasmania, Women's Office website, Feb. 2005; Women Tasmania, interview: March, 2005;
	Pilot project for seed funding for women to start up a business.	
	Start-up kits to WIN (Women's Information Network) rooms where women get referrals including to TAFE.	
	Dep't of Education established new childcare centres at primary schools for day-long care for children under 2 years.	Government of Tasmania, Department of Education, interview: March, 2005 & website: March, 2005.
Victoria	Jobs and Training program provides unemployed people (50% women) with 15 full-time weeks of employment & 110 hours of accredited training.	.
Western Australia	Project for increase in access to childcare for women in education & the workforce.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.
	2 programs to improve access to information and opportunity for women in small business.	
	Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 includes an emphasis on youth & women.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.

WORK, FAMILY AND LIFE

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Source
New South Wales	<p>Women's Equity Bureau in Office of Industrial Relations: - implements gov't policy on women in the workplace including, pay equity, employment discrimination & work & family issues - prepares the NSW Work and Family Strategy for the NSW Work and Family Taskforce.</p>	<p><i>NSW Government Action Plan for Women 2003-2005.</i></p>
	<p>Work and Family website (Office of Industrial Relations) in plain English: – guidelines for minimum legal requirements for employers; - how to implement family friendly work practices such as part-time work and flexible working hours; - Guide to Pregnancy & Work; - Maternity at Work.</p>	<p>NSW Dept of Commerce, Office of Industrial Relations website.</p>
	<p>NSW Anti-Discrimination Board president empowered to intervene in Industrial Relations Court cases to address systemic discrimination.</p>	
	<p>Adoption leave extended for children under 18 years old.</p>	
	<p>Personal carer's leave - a legal entitlement for employees covered by NSW awards to use sick leave for the care of a person who is sick by defined relationship to the employee.</p>	
	<p>Part-time work agreements, provided for by Industrial Relations Act, allow employees and employers to over-ride awards & enterprise agreement restrictions, contain pro-rated benefits & allow for employee to return to full time work.</p>	
Northern Territory		
Queensland	<p>Family-friendly work-places initiative led by Dept of Industrial Relations in partnership with Office for Women, Office of Public Service Merit and Equity & non-governmental stakeholders.</p>	<p>Queensland, Government, Office for Women 'Promoting the benefits of life balance website.</p>
	<p>Queensland Family Leave Award State & Queensland Industrial Relations Act (IRA) provide minimum family leave entitlements for employees.</p>	<p>Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State 2003-2008: Directions Statement.</i></p>
	<p>IRA protects employees from dismissal on work & family grounds.</p>	

	Casual employees with more than 12 months continuous service entitled to unpaid parental, adoption, carer & bereavement leaves, & protection from unfair dismissal actions on the basis of family responsibilities.	Queensland Government, <i>Premier's Policy Scan</i> . Queensland Government, <i>Women in the Smart State 2003-2008: Directions Statement</i> .
	Employers obliged to inform an employee of parental leave rights & provide information as how to access it.	
	Work and Family Unit , Dep't of Industrial Relations – joint research projects on how to help workplaces evaluate their work & family policies & on different work times.	Queensland Government, Balancing work and family website
	Work and Family Best of Both Worlds information kit for employers & employees on creating more family-friendly workplaces.	Source?
	Queensland Work and Family Awards recognise organisations for policies & practices that help balance work, family & lifestyle.	Source?
	In 2001 Gov't committed \$4 million over 3 years to school-age services to meet National Standards for Outside School Hours Care.	Source?
	Child Care Statewide Training Strategy gives subsidised training to staff to meet legislative standard.	
South Australia	Equal Opportunity Act 1984 being reviewed.	Government of South Australia, Office for Women, website: Feb. 2005.
Tasmania	Aust. Bureau of Statistics did survey in Tasmania, 'Balancing Work and Caring Responsibilities'. Publication on flexible work options due mid-2005. In 2005 space on Women Tasmania website to be dedicated to work and family section.	Government of Tasmania, Women Tasmania, e-mail & interview: March, 2005.
	2004 award for best practice family-friendly workplace.	
Victoria	Action Agenda for Work and Family Balance to cover 2003-2005 with a progress report card to be published in 2005. Gov't will work with business, unions, employers, employees & communities.	Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i> .
	Better Work and Family Balance Program funds pilot projects & research with a current focus on part-time work.	
	Flexible Work in Schools project examined work & family balance issues in 16 gov't schools & developed resources to support work & family balance.	Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003</i> .

	Payroll tax exemption given to employers in 2002-2003 for up to 14 weeks of full-time paid maternity & adoption leave.	
	Return-to-work grants of \$1000 for parents for training & support leading to employment.	Government of Victoria, <i>Valuing Victoria's Women: Report 2003-2004</i> ; Government of Victoria, <i>Gaining Ground for Victoria's Women 2002/2003</i> .
Western Australia	Work & family information on website of Dep't for Consumer & Employment Protection.	Government of Western Australia, Department for Consumer and employment Protection, <i>work and Family</i> , website: Feb. 2005.
	Grants to employ & employee organisations to update state awards to remove discriminatory provisions.	Government of Western Australia, <i>Women at work, at home and in the community: State Government Achievements 2004</i> , 2004.

Appendix C: Provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Discrimination against applicants and employees

30. (1) It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person-

(a) in determining, or in the course of determining, who should be offered employment;

or

(b) in the terms or conditions on which employment is offered.

(2) It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee-

(a) in the terms or conditions of employment;

(b) by denying or limiting access to opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, or to any other benefits connected with employment;

(c) by dismissing the employee;

Discrimination against contract workers

32. (1) This section applies to a principal for whom work is done by contract workers in pursuance of a contract between the principal and the employer of those contract workers.

(2) It is unlawful for a principal to enter into any contract or arrangement with an employer of contract workers under which the employer is to discriminate against a person.

(3) It is unlawful for the principal to discriminate against a contract worker-

(a) in the terms or conditions on which the contract worker is allowed to work;

(b) by not allowing the contract worker to work;

(c) by denying or limiting access to any benefit connected with employment;

or

(d) by subjecting the contract worker to any other detriment.

