



15 August 2014

Hon Gail Gago MLC
Minister for the Status of Women
GPO Box 1671
ADELAIDE SA 5001

PO Box 292
Adelaide SA 5001

Tel: 08 8303 0961
Fax: 08 8303 0963

ABN 11 525 031 744

premierscouncilforwomen@sa.gov.au

Dear Minister

We are writing to you in response to your letter regarding the South Australian Government review of boards and committees.

The Premiers Council for Women was established in December 2002 to provide leadership and advice to the Premier, the Minister for the Status of Women and in-turn Cabinet. It is hoped that this advice and leadership will assist in shaping the policy decisions that affect **all** South Australian Women.

The current members of the Premiers Council for Women (the Council) are:-

- Christine Zeitz, President North East Asia, BAE Systems
- Amanda Blair, Company Director
- Alison Adair, Consultant Lawyer, McDonald Steed McGrath
- Maria Hagias, Executive Director, Central Domestic Violence Services
- Ann-Marie Hayes, Director, Women's Health Services, Health
- Anuradha Mundkur, Associate Director, Gender Consortium Flinders University
- Nerida Saunders, Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, DPC
- Miriam Silva, A/CEO, TAFE SA
- Louise Stock, Owner, Focus Facilitation
- Katrina Webb, Director/Business Owner Silver 2 Gold

As you can see, these women are all highly skilled and diverse in their knowledge and backgrounds. They are all well connected individually and active within their own communities and employment sectors. Council members are paid a small fee for their services, but we are sure you will agree that this is extremely modest for the amount of work, contacts and clear, impartial perspective they bring to this role.

As highlighted in our annual reports to the Premier and you over the last few years, the Council has undertaken a variety projects, engaging with a broad range of networks and achieving positive outcomes for women (refer Attachment 1).

As newly appointed co-chairs, we are in the middle of consulting with all members to get some idea about the desired focus of the council for the next 12 -24 months. We are excited by the enthusiasm shown to lift the profile of the Council and to ensure that we have a connection point relevant to **all** South Australian women.



A strong theme that's coming from these discussions is a desire to choose 3 large projects to focus our work on. We are all outcome driven.

Some topics discussed have been domestic violence, stronger advocacy for education for women, work/life balance and real change within the workplace (including workforce participation), ageing, homelessness, pay gap inequality, sexism, bullying. We haven't made a decision on these projects yet, pending a decision about the future of the council.

Should we be reviewed favourably, we would also like to improve our relationships with the media and lift the profile of the Council and in-turn, highlight the issues we are working on.

One great idea from our discussions is to use the media to highlight South Australian women doing great things within their community - local champions who will serve as role models for all women regardless of their circumstance. We anticipate a partnership with News Limited who would be asked to publish a story regularly. This is just a working idea, but gives you an indication of the exciting direction we want to move towards.

We would also like to connect more with the general public potentially via social media and via public events where we may offer a selection of interesting speakers/workshops for free and for all. Some of these events could be promoted in partnership with the Women's Information Services and naturally we would explore partnerships with the private sector so that there is no additional cost is incurred by government.

We would also like to further strengthen our relationships with industry, education and community services so that we can continue to identify areas where we can improve the lives and opportunities for women.

Minister, it is important that South Australian women feel that there is somebody out there battling for them, looking out for them and pushing their needs forward to the heads of government so that their needs are considered in all policy making decisions.

We see this as our primary function.

We look forward to your response.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Blair'.

Amanda Blair
Co-chair
Premier's Council for Women

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Zeitz'.

Christine Zeitz
Co-chair
Premier's Council for Women



Attachment 1: Premier's Council for Women Achievements

- Undertaking State-wide e-consultations in May-June 2014 to obtain information about South Australian women's concerns and needs. The responses identified the key issues of concern for women and will help focus the PCW work plan 2014-2018.
- Developing and launching in 2013 *Words into Action: A practical guide to achieve gender equity in your workplace and improve your company's performance*. The Guide was developed in partnership with industry, the Office for Women and Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy and is available to, and used by, a variety of public and private sector organisations. The Guide can be viewed at www.wicl.com.au or www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au
- Developing and launching in 2011 a new "wiki" - Women in Corporate Leadership [WiCL], a database of research, media reports, toolkits and other resources to be used by individuals and businesses working to improve the diversity in their leadership and workplace. It highlights existing good practice and also has an area for women leaders and aspiring leaders to find resources and networks. www.wicl.com.au
- Staging in 2011 a business lunch in partnership with the American Chamber of Commerce on the opportunities for companies employing women at leadership levels, which targeted senior male executives in companies working in areas of non-traditional employment for women (350 business leaders attended and awareness was raised).
- Achieving a commitment by the SA Government in 2011 to include a new target for violence against women in the South Australian Strategic Plan through working with women's advocates and the community.
- Undertaking State-wide consultations during 2010 to obtain information about women's concerns and needs as part of the broader community consultations conducted for the Update of South Australia's Strategic Plan. The information heard during the consultation sessions also informed the development of the PCW work plan 2011-2013.
- Helping to establish the Premier's Women's Directory [PWD], an online directory of women with skills, qualifications and expertise, suitable for appointment to boards and committees.
- Arguing successfully for sex-disaggregated analysis of data central to monitoring progress against targets in South Australia's Strategic Plan [2007-2009 and 2010-11]. This will help assess how women are faring across most sectors.
- Commissioning research on women's participation in paid employment and working conditions in South Australia, *Working Women in South Australia: Progress, Prospects and Challenges* [2009] by Prof Barbara Pocock. The Pocock Report identifies evidence of SA women's disadvantage in employment and has been disseminated statewide and frequently referenced.
- Lobbying for reform in equal opportunity legislation [passed in Parliament July 2009].
- Commissioning significant research into *Gender Disaggregated Data* (2004) and the *Impact on Women of the Casualisation of the Workforce* (2005).