

Preface

Making the Link14

Making the Link: Affirmative Action and Employment Relations 14 brings together selected papers from the 2002 Women, Management and Employment Relations Conference and some additional papers as appendices in the back section.

In previous editions, the preface has commented on major recent developments with relevance to equal employment opportunity. This role is played here in Chapter One by Dominique Beck, Honorary Fellow of the Labour-Management Studies Foundation, and Ed Davis.

Their focus is on the barriers to women's careers informed by the EOWA-Catalyst survey, paid maternity leave, the work-life collision and federal government legislative intentions which might weaken the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission.

Moira Rayner is acting commissioner for equal opportunity in Western Australia. In Chapter Two, she argues that champions for EEO should commit more time and attention to changing workplace culture. In particular, more needs to be done to raise awareness of the critical importance of ethical behaviour.

Julie Mellor is chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission in Great Britain. In Chapter Three, she identifies the major challenges faced in her country and looks at the progress made.

Amanda Sinclair, foundation professor of management (diversity and change) at the Melbourne Business School, is well known for her books and papers on leadership. In Chapter Four, she reflects on her own journey to leadership positions and the changes in her understanding of the nature of leadership.

Margaret Vischer, senior vice president human resources and organisational development at Cochlear Limited, follows in Chapter Five. She traces her career path, noting the forces that assisted and obstructed her.

Air Commodore Julie Hammer outlines a military perspective on leadership in Chapter Six. The military has traditionally reflected a male-dominated culture. She looks at the implications for women seeking careers in defence organisations. In particular, she explores the leadership strategies required to pursue equal opportunity. Her theme is that the pursuit of EEO is a vital element in the push for higher levels of performance. Julie's chapter contains contributions from Jan Noonan, officer commanding Navy squadron; Lieutenant Colonel Alison Creagh (Army) and Warrant Officer Jen Riehes (Air force).

Chapter Seven considers the story of women's pay in Australia from 1907-2002. Christine Short, PhD student

at Curtin University, looks at landmark developments from the Harvester Case heard in the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in 1907 to recent state-based inquiries into pay inequity. Her conclusion is that much female work remains undervalued and underpaid. She lists recommendations for the attention of both governments and human resources managers.

Carmen Lawrence, current member of federal parliament and former Labor premier of Western Australia, in Chapter Eight, looks at the plight of women in low-paid, part-time and precarious jobs. Part-time work remains a trap for many women workers.

In Chapter Nine, Professor Graeme Russell, Macquarie University, discusses the obstacles facing fathers in their bid to balance work and family responsibilities. He suggests that employers need to identify their staff with family responsibilities, consult them and assist them. Too many organisations have demonstrated little interest in this to the detriment of staff and workplace performance.

In the final chapter, Chapter 10, Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward reports on the state of the debate on paid maternity leave. Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC) has argued strongly for paid maternity leave. The debate now seems to be how it should be funded; in particular, the extent to which it should be employer or government funded.

There are four appendices. The first, by Gillian Whitehouse, reader at University of Queensland, looks at research into pay equity. The second, by Barbara Poocek, director of the Center for Labour Studies, University of Adelaide, is drawn from her new book *Work Life Collision*. It reflects on the range and intensity of pressures on those struggling to balance work and life responsibilities. The third by Dominique Beck and Ed Davis is a study of women managers at Westpac Banking Corp. The fourth presents a summary of data from the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA)-Catalyst survey.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to all those organisations that formally supported the *Women, Management and Employment Relations* Conference in July 2002:

- AMP Limited
- Anti Discrimination Board
- Australian Business Limited
- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Federation of Business & Professional Women Inc.

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- Australian Industry Group
- Baker & McKenzie
- CCH Australia Limited
- Centrum Events Pty Ltd. Business Women's Breakfast Series
- Chief Executive Women Inc.
- Clayton Utz
- Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment Limited
- Department of Defence
- Department for Women
- Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, New Zealand
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency
- Families at Work
- Flexibility at Work
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
- Job Watch Inc.
- Labor Council of New South Wales
- Managing Work-Life Balance
- NSW EEO Practitioners' Association
- Office of the Director for Equal Opportunity in Public Employment
- State Chamber of Commerce (New South Wales)
- Work and Family Unit, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Workplace Info Website
- Zonta International, District 24.

Finally, thanks to Pam Morpeth and Caroline Falls who have for the fourteenth year been part of the team to produce the *Making the Link* series. Their continued effort and grace are very much appreciated.

Ed Davis and Valerie Pratt
June 2003

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