

Rio Tinto: Questions on Notice (20 July 2021)

Senator Pratt question

Q. In that context, I might ask you to take a look at what Kate Jenkins initially reported in her review, which was to insert that positive duty into the Sex Discrimination Act, and if you could go away and have a look at that I would be grateful. It sounds like you're committed to doing these things anyway, and that, therefore, any risk for Rio Tinto is mitigated. What the Minerals Council also made clear is that the current system isn't working and, hence, there is that need for this renewed drive. That cultural proactivity is currently what's missing from the law in terms of—as you said, you want to be on a proactive footing about that and we also need the law to be. Many of the other submitters have highlighted that in effect the positive duty is non-existent and non-effective in the current law. If you're able to take that on notice for me that would be terrific.

Answer: Rio Tinto agrees with the MCA that a positive duty exists within OHS laws. In addition, we remain supportive of more consistent and clearer legislation that provides an appropriate legislative framework to assist organisations eliminate sexual harassment. This could include aligning a positive duty in the sexual discrimination act to mirror the positive duty in the OHS laws. We have in any event formed the view that Rio Tinto should proactively eliminate the potential for sexual harassment to occur in our business and are in the process of undertaking extensive cultural change and system improvements via our Everyday Respect Taskforce to achieve this.

Senator Waters question

Q. This is the last question from me. If you have these figures to hand, I'm interested in what is the gender make-up of your workforce, particularly on the mine sites as opposed to the corporate environments per se. If you don't have that to hand, we'd be happy to receive that on notice

Answer: 16.9% of Rio Tinto's Australian operational site workforce is female, while overall 22.1% of our Australian employees are female when corporate offices are also included.