



# ***Making it Fair***

## **Media Conference: Employment and Workplace Relations Committee tables its report into pay equity**

To address the pay equity gap in Australia for women a new report by the House of Representatives Employment and Workplace Relations Committee has recommended a raft of amendments to the *Fair Work Act* and *Sex Discrimination Act*.

The 465 page report *Making it Fair* makes 63 recommendations to federal government following an extensive parliamentary inquiry into pay equity and associated issues related to increasing female participation in the workforce.

“Australia needs to take a pro-active approach to address the gender pay gap,” Committee Chair Sharryn Jackson (Member for Hasluck, WA) said.

“Increasing women’s participation in the workforce will lead to increases in productivity for the nation. How can Australia afford not to do it?”

The report and its 63 recommendations were tabled in parliament last night and include calls for:

- Amending the *Fair Work Act 2009* and sex discrimination legislation to make equal remuneration for men and women employees for work of equal or comparable value the explicit object of the legislation;
- The federal Government elevating pay equity as a clear objective of modern awards;
- The Australian Industrial Relations Commission reporting to the Committee prior to the finalisation of the awards on how pay equity principles have been achieved;
- Amending the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* to make it mandatory for employers who are repeat offenders discriminating on the basis of pregnancy or carer’s responsibility to be required to attend counselling or an approved training course;
- Government leadership strategies including annual pay equity audit reporting for all government agencies;
- Minimising ‘red tape’ for business;
- Establishment of a Pay Equity Unit with education, research and enforcement roles to focus approaches to address the gender pay gap; and
- Removal of the exemption from the payment of the 9 per cent superannuation charge for employees who earn less than \$450 per month.

Details of a media conference to discuss the report and its recommendations are as follows:

**Event:** Media Conference on parliamentary report on pay equity and associated issues related to increasing women’s participation in the workforce.  
**Date/Time:** Tuesday, 24 November 2009, 1:00pm – 1:30pm.  
**Where:** Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra.  
**Webcast:** Live on <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting>

The report is available from the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ewr>

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Sharryn Jackson, on (02) 6277 4044 (Parliament House)

**For background information**, contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4162, email [ewr.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:ewr.reps@aph.gov.au) or visit the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ewr/>