



Australian Government

Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Deputy Secretary

Dear

Andrew Tongue, Acting Secretary, wrote to you on 22 December 2010, advising you of the Government's election commitment to increase the percentage of women on Government Boards by setting a 40% target for women on Australian Government boards by 2015. A copy of the *2009-10 Women on Australian Government Boards Report* (the Report) was enclosed with that letter.

The Report outlined the representation rate of women and men on Government boards and bodies, including within each portfolio for the 2009-10 year. The content of the Report is based on advice and data provided and verified by Departments.

Unfortunately, we have now been advised by one Department that their data in the report is incorrect. This not only impacts on the entries for that Department but also impacts on the conclusions in the report. For this reason, we are withdrawing the current report.

We need to re-issue a revised report for 2009-2010 as soon as possible, but want to ensure that all departments have had an opportunity to re-verify their data to ensure there are no further errors. We are seeking your Department's urgent assistance in this matter and have emailed your contact officer to get this process started.

Given the election commitment related to women on government boards it is likely that the issue of women's representation on portfolio boards will be raised in Senate Estimates. This could be with the Office for Women or directly with portfolios. Where questions are raised with you we recommend that any Senate Estimate responses include a cross checking of your internal data and that in the report that was recently distributed.

I would be very grateful for your assistance in examining the 2009-10 Report to ensure it accurately reflects your portfolio's circumstances. We are currently liaising with contacts within your Department and are seeking a final senior-level sign-off by close of business Tuesday **22 February 2011**. This will enable us to provide accurate and comprehensive data to Senate Estimates and enable re-publication of the Report as soon as possible. Once we have the new report we will circulate a copy to you.

Thank you for your, and your Department's, continued assistance in the production of the Report and on-going support to deliver the *Women on Government Boards* initiative.

Yours sincerely

Liza Carroll

18 February 2011

