

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Supplementary Hearings 2002-2003, 20 November 2002

Question: PM39

Outcome 1, Output 2.2

Topic: Appoint*Women*

Direct on Notice

Senator Crossin asked: The OSW states in the PMC annual report that as a result of the 'Appoint Women' initiative, the number of women who hold Commonwealth board positions has in fact increased from 31.7% in 1996 to 33.8% in 2002. Given this is not much of an increase in 8 years (less than half a percent per year) what has been identified as reasons for this small increase and how does the 'Appoint Women' initiative intend to address this given it's purpose is to encourage portfolios to appoint highly skilled women to Commonwealth boards and bodies?

Answer: Appoint*Women* is part of the Women's National Leadership initiative announced in the 2001-02 budget and aims to increase the number of women in decision-making and leadership roles in Australia. The initial phase of Appoint*Women*, an executive search service, was implemented in June 2002, and included:

- the design and implementation of a customised database;
- update and verification of candidate and client data; and
- design and production of forms, brochures and website.

APPOINT reporting (a half yearly report generated by each portfolio on boards and bodies) indicates that there has been a slight increase in the number of women who hold Commonwealth board positions over the last 6 years. At June 2002, the latest APPOINT reports received, women held 33.9% of Commonwealth board positions that are under total Commonwealth control.

The 2002-03 Appoint*Women* strategy includes:

- Marketing the service to a range of clients including portfolio ministers, departmental secretaries, APPOINT contact officers, board secretariats and in some cases specific boards/bodies.
- Continuing to develop and improve the number of quality candidates available through the service.