

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

All Programs

Question No. 3

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2010:

What is the Government's position regarding the importance of gender balance across portfolios in terms of board appointments?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

Recognising the importance of women's participation in the workforce and in all levels of decision-making to the national economy, the Australian Government is committed to improving the gender balance in the boardrooms, and in the senior ranks, of the private and public sectors.

Women currently hold 33.4 per cent of positions across 529 Government boards and bodies. There is a range of measures and initiatives in place to increase this percentage. The representation of women is monitored using the Government Boards Reporting system which provides whole-of-government status reports on Australian Government board, body and appointment related data.

Through the Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand Ministers' Conference on the Status of Women, the Australian, State and Territory Governments are working together to draft a national strategy focussed towards increasing the level of women's representation on public, private and community sector boards.

Shortly, the *Women on Australian Government Boards and Bodies 2008-2009 Report* will be publicly released for the first time, to show accountability and transparency in Government board appointments.