

DIVERSITY IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Data released today on built environment consulting firms proves industry initiatives have improved Board diversity levels; demonstrating the importance of the recently-formed CEO-led Champions of Change group.

Consult Australia's survey results have been made public one day ahead of the release of the Women on Boards' evaluation of ASX200 companies' gender diversity practices.

The Association's 2013 diversity survey—representative of over 19,500 professionals—found over 15 per cent of the industry's Board positions are now filled with women; but the base is still low, with less than 29 per cent female firm employees.

Hyder Managing Director – Australasia and Chair of the Champions of Change group, Greg Steele said firms had shown commitment to long-term goals to improve diversity, but warns that change will not be achieved overnight.

"The improvements we've seen since Consult Australia's first diversity survey in 2011 are good," said Mr Steele.

"However, improvements are not universal. In some areas there's been little, to no progress—but this should not deter employers from pursuing activities to promote diversity and inclusion."

Consult Australia's survey also identifies differences in pay, turnover, age at seniority levels and other factors to indicate where further work should be directed.

"In a somewhat surprising outcome, the gender pay gap is most stark in the corporate and support services stream which is, at the lower ranks, a female-dominated area.

"This challenges presumptions about causes for gender pay gaps and requires close examination."

Consult Australia has used the data to create their report, *Workforce Diversity Industry Snapshot 2013*, which provides industry leaders with a basis for and framework to take action.

"I am pleased that the Consult Australia Champions of Change group—comprised of 13 CEOs from some of Australia's largest built environment consultancy firms—has accepted the challenge of responding to all 10 recommendations made in the report," said Mr Steele.

"Long-term and systemic improvements in the data will only become entrenched when business leaders take personal responsibility for creating change.

"A commitment to take action is essential, can be done on an individual or collective basis, and will make a big difference towards meeting workforce diversity and inclusion goals."

Ends

25 September 2013

MEDIA RELEASE



Driving Business Success for Consulting Firms in the Built and Natural Environment

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact PR & Policy Coordinator, Gillian O'Young on (02) 8252 6715 or via email at gillian@consultaustralia.com.au.

About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the leading not-for-profit association that represents the business interests of consulting firms operating in the built and natural environment.

Our member firms include: AECOM, Arup, Aquentia, Cox Architects, GHD, Hyder Consulting, Parsons Brinckerhoff, URS Australia, and WorleyParsons.

We represent an industry comprising some 48,000 firms across Australia, ranging from sole practitioners through to some of Australia's top 500 firms. Collectively, our industry is estimated to employ over 240,000 people, and generate combined revenue exceeding \$40 billion a year.