

Chief Executive Officer

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Secretary:	D.



14 August 2008

The Secretary, Standing Committee on Employment and Workplace Relations
House of Representatives, P O Box 6021 Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RE: PAY EQUITY ISSUES

Please find below comment on the issues raised in your letter of 15 July 2008.

- Adequate data is available through the WA Department of Consumer and Employment Protection Pay Equity website.
- The WA Department of Consumer and Employment Protection and Chamber of Commerce and Industry provide relevant education and information for employers.
- The City has not encountered impediments in the current arrangements in the negotiation of wages that may impact disproportionately on women.
- The City is bound by Awards and Certified Agreements which provide for equal pay for equal work value.
- Fair access to training and promotion is covered by the anti-discrimination legislation. How effective this is will depend on the definition of "operational reasons" which employers may use to refuse fair access.
- The Pay Equity section of the WA Department of Consumer and Employment Protection has provided a range of pay equity solutions. These proposed solutions do not point to the need for further legislation.
- Equal Pay for equal work value is an established principle. However the work that attracts the female workforce appears to be valued lower – for example child care workers.
- The economics of entering the workforce for a female with family responsibilities are a major consideration. The cost of child care and elder care can make participation in the workforce of marginal economic benefit to the household, especially in low paid occupations.
- Provision of access to flexible work arrangements, including quality part time work, is important in enabling people with family responsibilities to participate in the workforce, and also to retain the older workforce. Clear definitions of what are "reasonable operational reasons" for employers to grant or refuse flexible work arrangements are needed.

If you require further information please contact

Yours sincerely

FRANK EDWARDS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER