



## YVETTE BERRY MLA

Minister for Housing, Community Services and Social Inclusion  
Minister for Multicultural and Youth Affairs  
Minister for Sport and Recreation  
Minister for Women

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Member for Ginninderra

Ms Anne Cahill Lambert, AM  
Australian Capital Territory Remuneration Tribunal  
PO Box 964  
Civic Square ACT 2608

Dear Ms Cahill Lambert, *Anne*.

I am writing in relation to the ACT Remuneration Tribunal's review of the remuneration and the entitlements of part-time office holders in the Australian Capital Territory.

The ACT Government is committed to achieving a 50% representation of females on ACT Boards and Committees in order to ensure appropriate consideration of gender related issues on policy and program decisions in the ACT.

The full participation of women and girls in all aspects of society is critical to the wellbeing of the whole community. The ACT Government is committed to removing barriers for women and girls to reach their potential, contribute to innovation and ideas, and to take up leadership positions.

The ACT has a strong record in achieving gender balance with 48% of appointments to ACT Boards and Committees being female. It should be noted that while a range of boards and committees are predominately filled by male appointees, there are an equal number of boards and committees predominately filled by female appointees.



In addition, the ACT has achieved a relatively high gender balance in relation to remuneration on boards and committees with 46% of the highest paid appointments being held by females. Some improvement in this area is still required to achieve full gender equality. In the ACT, females also make up 51% of chair and deputy chair positions on ACT boards and committees.

In December 2015, the Whole of Government Appointments Register was extended to capture additional information on the diversity of appointees. The register indicates a low level of representation and remuneration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and people with disabilities.

It is vital that decision making bodies are reflective of the communities they represent and that women with a range of life experiences and backgrounds are able to take up leadership positions.

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CANBERRA

These statistics demonstrate progress towards gender equality on ACT boards and committees, including remuneration of appointments. However there is scope to consider whether boards with a predominant female membership and those which seek to capture the diverse experiences of our community are being remunerated in a way consistent with the knowledge and expertise of their membership.

Any deficit in remuneration may act as a disincentive to the ACT Government achieving the best possible representation of our diverse community and would diminish the significant contribution of current part-time office holders.

### **Improving Representation of Diverse Women on Boards and Committees**

The ACT Government is taking action to improve the representation of diverse women across all boards and committees. The Office for Multicultural Affairs, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, and Office for Women, are consulted on all ACT Government Board and Committee appointments. Early consultation enables these offices to provide recommendations regarding suitable candidates for board and committee appointments.

Currently, consultation often occurs after proposed appointees have been selected by board and committee panels, reducing the capacity to influence appointment decisions.

To assist in promoting greater diversity on boards and committees, the ACT Community Participation Group within the Community Services Directorate, is developing an online Diversity Register to provide an easier way for Canberrans to express their interest in serving on boards and committees. This will assist directorates to identify suitable people that appropriately represent the diversity of the ACT community.

However, there remains a concern that diverse women may be deterred from participation on boards and committees due the low rates of remuneration for bodies on which their expertise and experiences are often sought.

### **Improving Remuneration of Diverse Women on Boards and Committees**

In reviewing the remuneration, allowances and entitlements for part-time office holders I request that the *ACT Remuneration Tribunal* give specific attention to the appropriateness of current remuneration for ACT Government office holders who have been appointed to offer perspective on the diverse experiences of Canberra's women, with particular emphasis on; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and women with disabilities.

I request that the Tribunal give specific attention to whether:

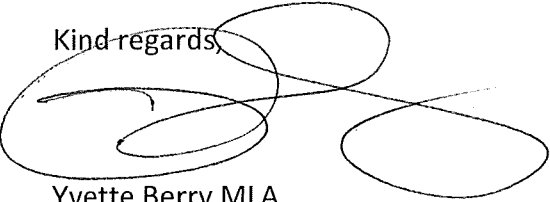
- Current classification methodology for the remuneration of ACT Government Boards and Committees privileges expertise in traditionally gendered fields such as science and legal professions over like professional or personal experience which may be of equal value to the community.
- Within the current classification system, the diverse personal and professional experiences of women that are sought through Ministerial Advisory Councils and

- similar bodies are being remunerated adequately to reflect that, for the purpose of these positions, the participant's personal and professional experiences reflect expertise in the field.
- Low rates of remuneration on bodies which offer advice to government on the diverse experiences of women, and the community more generally, may act as a disincentive to participation for low income earners and those working outside of Public Service structures where participation in such bodies is not supported by work place entitlements.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer perspectives on the success of the ACT Government in engaging women on our boards and committees.

I encourage the Tribunal to seek any further necessary information on the roles and classifications of Ministerial Advisory Councils through the Community Services Directorate who offer secretariat support to the majority of these bodies.

Kind regards,



Yvette Berry MLA