

# GRADUATE WOMEN VICTORIA

*Serving and empowering women through education and advocacy*



The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier of Victoria  
Office of the Premier  
1 Treasury Place  
Melbourne, VIC 3002

Dear Premier Andrews

## **Re Representation of Women on Government Boards and the Judiciary**

Graduate Women Victoria (GWV) is a non-government organisation working to support the higher education of women and girls through a substantial scholarship program, it is also an advocate for women's rightful access to and representation in the community

GWV applauds the leadership you have shown in your commitment to make a difference to women's representation on Government Boards and the Judiciary. Making a commitment to equal representation will hopefully flag to the broader community the importance of achieving equality in the workplace.

For far too long, too many have turned a blind eye to who is in the room and simply did not see the disparity in front of them.

Recent media articles have highlighted the slow progress, if not backward slippage, of women on Boards in the business sector.

Women on Boards notes the participation of women on significant boards at Federal and State level is a mixed bag in 2015. While Tasmania, NSW, and Victoria are showing improvement and South Australia is holding its position at the front of the pack with more than 48% of all directorships held by women, the Federal Government, Western Australia and Queensland have gone backwards. This is particularly disappointing, as the Federal Government has made great efforts to improve gender diversity in previous years.

As a society we can have no reasonable argument why this imbalance is still present today. Women make up approximately half of all graduates.

In May 2014, the Australia Bureau of Statistics reported 57% of people aged 15–74 years had a non-school qualification. There was a higher proportion of males (59%) than females (56%) having a non-school qualification.

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However, a higher proportion of females (26%) than males (22%) had obtained a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification. 6227.0 – Education and Work, Australia, May 2014, <http://www.abs.gov.au>

Too many compelling arguments why equal representation makes good business sense have been rehearsed to no avail. Decisive action and strong leadership is vital and well overdue.

Graduate Women Victoria, representing over 95 years of graduate women, upholds the right of women and girls to education in order to reach their full potential . We thank you for your commitment to ensuring Government Boards and the Judiciary reflect the make-up of our society and acknowledge the importance of women’s participation in the senior roles in our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Jennifer Strauss AM  
President, Graduate Women Victoria