

The logo for Women in Resources South Australia is a circular emblem with a gradient from orange to yellow. It features the text 'Women in Resources' in white, with 'in' inside a blue circle, and 'South Australia' in smaller white text below.

Women in  
Resources  
South Australia

## Women in Resources South Australia

# *Shaping the future 2014 survey results*

Prepared by Aimee Chadwick  
Chair, Women in Resources South Australia

Assisted by Bridget Fardon  
Project Officer, Women in Resources South Australia



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## Executive summary

The “*Shaping the Future*” online survey was distributed to the Women in Resources South Australia (WinRSA) database on 23 October 2014. The survey was also distributed to the South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) database on 12 November 2014. At the close of the survey on 30 November 2014, there were 194 responses received (115 females and 79 males).

The survey asked many questions on opportunities and participation including career progression, balancing workplace and caring responsibilities and how the representation of women in the sector can be improved. Overall the following key themes emerged:

- The need to implement more flexible work options for both women and men and for organisations to explore how they can provide more meaningful part time roles.
- The need for cultural change including understanding and embracing the benefits of inclusion and diversity, identifying champions of change and a greater acceptance of a flexible work culture.
- The need for professional development and training with a focus on mentoring: 68% of respondents indicated they would benefit from a mentoring relationship.

The survey also included a series of questions on diversity, inclusion and people’s experiences in the workplace. In regards to many of these questions men and women were split on their responses. These differences present a genuine opportunity for further discussion amongst industry participants. We must work towards developing a shared understanding and bridge the perception gaps. However, in analysing the perception gaps the hard facts must also be acknowledged. For example, the gender pay gap is still an unacceptable reality at 27% for minerals professionals<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, it is important to see increased measurement and reporting on both the gender pay gap and representation of women in the sector.

Feedback was also sought on the WinRSA objectives. Majority of respondents viewed that working with industry to promote the participation, retention and advancement of women in the Sector was the top priority. This was closely followed by the need to facilitate discussion and understanding of common issues to support women in the Sector including the provision of networking opportunities, speakers and events and forums to discuss progression into leadership roles. When the results were viewed in conjunction with the open ended feedback, respondents also saw the need for WinRSA to collaborate with other groups supporting women in the Sector.

In closing, the survey feedback is greatly valued and the results have played an integral part in better understanding the needs of the WinRSA members which will underpin the future direction of WinRSA. A strong participation by members ensures informed strategic initiatives are developed and implemented in support of the WinRSA purpose to promote the involvement and contribution of women in the Sector and to provide meaningful engagement opportunities.



Aimee Chadwick  
Chair, WinRSA

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<sup>1</sup> Clark, A (2015) ‘*The Diversity Challenge*’, The AusIMM Bulletin, February 2015, pp. 32-33

## Demographics

Q: Please specify your gender?

A: 194 respondents in total 115 female (59%) and 79 male (41%).

Q: Please select your age category?

A: 56% of male respondents 50 years of age or above.  
67% of female respondents aged 30-50.

Respondents	Female	Male
less than 25	4%	0%
25-29	9%	2%
30-34	17%	4%
35-39	14%	7%
40-44	19%	13%
45-49	17%	18%
50 or above	20%	56%

Q: How many years have you worked in the Minerals and Energy Resources Sector (the Sector)?

A: 59% of male respondents have been working in the Sector for more than 15 years compared to only 25% for females.

58% of female respondents fall within the 2-15 year category.

Respondents	Female	Male
less than 2 years	17%	7%
2-7 years	33%	15%
8-15 years	25%	19%
more than 15 years	25%	59%

Q: Where is your primary place of work?

A: Both male and female respondents were predominantly city based.

Respondents	Female	Male
Predominantly city based	84%	66%
Predominantly site based	6%	6%
A bit of both	10%	28%

Q: Please indicate your type of employment.

A: Both male and female respondents were predominantly employed on a full time basis. However, 24% of female respondents were currently working on a part-time basis compared to only 4% for male respondents.

Respondents	Female	Male
Full time	70%	91%
Part time	24%	4%
Casual / Contract	6%	5%

Q: Please indicate your average hours per week.

A: Female respondents predominantly work 31-40 hours per week.  
Male respondents predominantly work 41-50 hours per week.

Respondents	Female	Male
5-10	5%	5%
11-20	5%	2%
21-30	23%	5%
31-40	34%	17%
41-50	23%	45%
51-60	10%	21%
61-70	0%	5%

Q: Which of the following best describes your usual work schedule?

A: Both female and male respondents predominantly work a regular work week.

Respondents	Female	Male
Regular work week (Mon-Fri or part thereof)	91%	87%
Regular day shift (Roster)	5%	4%
Other	4%	9%

Q: Which category best describes your current role?

A: Both female and male respondents predominantly work in management roles.

Respondents	Female	Male
Administration	12%	4%
Community Engagement	7%	5%
Engineer	6%	9%
Environment	5%	3%
Finance / Accounting	5%	5%
Geoscientist	10%	14%
Human Resources	10%	4%
Information Technology	2%	4%
Legal	8%	2%
Management	17%	39%
Metallurgist	1%	0%
Other	13%	10%
Safety and Health	4%	0%
Trade	0%	1%

**Q. Please indicate the level of your position:**

A. 43% of female respondents were from middle management, with Executive, Senior and Middle making up 70% of all female respondents (compared to 82% of male respondents).

Respondent	Female	Male
Board director	2%	9%
Executive management	10%	27%
Senior management	17%	34%
Middle management	43%	21%
Supervisor	10%	0%
Graduate	8%	1%
Junior staff / Administrator	7%	4%
Other	3%	4%

**Q. Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed.**

A. 20% of female respondents have completed Postgraduate studies compared to 14% male. 21% of male respondents have completed a Masters degree compared to 17% female.

Respondent	Female	Male
Year 12	6%	4%
Trade/technical/vocational training	11%	11%
Bachelor degree	42%	42%
Masters degree	17%	21%
Doctorate degree	4%	8%
Postgraduate	20%	14%

**Q. Please indicate the subsector that is most relevant to your current role.**

A. Concentration in mining and oil and gas subsectors, followed by service providers.

Respondent	Female	Male
Education	3%	3%
Extractive minerals	6%	4%
Government	9%	5%
Mining	26%	39%
Oil and gas	29%	13%
Service provider mining contractor	3%	6%
Service provider technical / professional / consulting	16%	20%
Other	8%	10%

Q. What is the size of workforce of the organisation in which you are directly employed?

A. 42% of male respondents work in an organisation of less than 50 people compared to 26% of female respondents.

22% of female respondents work in larger organisations (2,000+ workforces) compared with only 11% male respondents.

Respondents	Female	Male
Less than 50	26%	42%
50-99	3%	13%
100-249	18%	14%
250-499	21%	6%
500-999	2%	8%
1000-1999	8%	6%
2,000 plus	22%	11%

## Diversity and inclusion

Q. To what extent to you agree with the following statements as they related to your organisation.

Respondents	Gender	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
Diversity is actively embraced	Female	22%	66%	8%	3%	1%
	Male	53%	42%	2%	0%	3%
Female employees are well represented at senior levels	Female	9%	35%	42%	14%	0%
	Male	20%	38%	30%	6%	6%
The promotion and advancement of women into senior roles is a priority, both in principle and practice	Female	8%	36%	45%	10%	1%
	Male	18%	42%	26%	5%	9%
When selecting people for roles I usually tend to choose people who are similar to myself	Female	4%	26%	51%	4%	15%
	Male	0%	15%	63%	11%	11%
Do you think unconscious bias is impacting your career progression	Female	11%	39%	41%	5%	4%
	Male	3%	15%	48%	23%	11%
Women are provided with more opportunities than men	Female	1%	3%	65%	29%	2%
	Male	0%	14%	70%	10%	6%

## Commentary:

### Diversity is actively embraced

- Responses indicate that diversity is actively embraced however male respondents more strongly agree (53%) with this compared to female respondents (22%).

### Female employees are well represented at senior levels

- Per the 2013-14 gender equity scorecard, as compiled by the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA), the mining sector has the least women in management roles. In addition, the gender equity scorecard reports that across, all industries, just under one in four directors (including chairs) are female<sup>2</sup>.

### The promotion and advancement of women into senior roles is a priority, both in principle and practice

- A large percentage of female (45%) and male (26%) respondents disagree with this statement. Does this raise questions about whether organisations are 'walking the talk'?

### When selecting people for roles, I usually tend to choose people who are similar to myself

- The majority of both female and male respondents disagree.

### Do you think unconscious bias is impacting your career progression?

- Whilst male respondents clearly disagree with this statement, female respondents seem to be split with 41% disagreeing and 39% agreeing.

### Women are provided with more opportunities than men

- The majority of both female and male respondents disagreed that women are provided with more opportunities than men.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-14\\_summary\\_report\\_website.pdf](https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-14_summary_report_website.pdf)



## Opportunity

The views below regarding job roles, level of pay and opportunities for the promotion of women in the resources sector have been expressed in the public domain. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Respondents	Gender	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
It is almost impossible for women to progress to executive levels in such a male-dominated culture as the resources sector	Female	5%	41%	44%	9%	1%
	Male	2%	6%	63%	27%	2%
The expectation that female employees will at some stage leave to have children means less attention is given to their advancement.	Female	9%	51%	32%	6%	2%
	Male	0%	21%	59%	18%	2%
Some women avoid promotion because of concerns about balancing workplace demands and caring responsibilities	Female	17%	58%	19%	3%	3%
	Male	3%	57%	33%	2%	5%
The focus on mentoring and networking to increase the numbers of women in senior executive roles and on boards has not worked. It entrenches the view that women need to be "fixed"	Female	6%	41%	41%	4%	8%
	Male	0%	12%	74%	6%	8%
Women who do not have children or other caring responsibilities are also under represented in the senior ranks	Female	14%	52%	21%	5%	8%
	Male	2%	44%	47%	1%	6%
Women are under-represented in corporate promotions from the beginning of their careers	Female	13%	49%	33%	4%	1%
	Male	3%	30%	51%	8%	8%
The pay gap in the resources sector is grossly exaggerated	Female	4%	33%	39%	10%	14%
	Male	5%	39%	38%	4%	14%
Companies have taken significant steps to address structural disadvantages in the resources industry so women now have the same opportunities as men	Female	3%	37%	46%	4%	10%
	Male	8%	62%	23%	3%	4%
The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 now requires all employers of 100 or more staff to report annually on a range of gender equality indicators, this will prompt organisations to address gender inequality	Female	4%	50%	34%	5%	7%
	Male	3%	52%	36%	3%	6%

## Commentary:

It is almost impossible for women to progress to executive levels in such a male-dominated culture as the resources sector

- It is noteworthy, that female respondents are split on the question of whether or not it is impossible to progress in a male-dominated culture with 44% disagreeing compared to 41% agreeing.

The expectation that female employees will at some stage leave to have children means less attention is given to their advancement

- Strong divide between males and females with more than half of females agreeing/strongly compared to well over 70% of males disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.
- There is more work to be done in trying to understand this perception gap.

Some women avoid promotion because of concerns about balancing workplace demands and caring responsibilities

- This statement is perceived similarly by female and male respondents with more than half of each agreeing that some women avoid promotion because of concerns about balancing workplace demands and caring responsibilities.

The focus on mentoring and networking to increase the numbers of women in senior executive roles and on boards has not worked. It entrenches the view that women need to be "fixed"

- Once again, female respondents are in conflict over this with 47% agreeing/strongly agreeing and 45% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing. This is in contrast to the majority of male respondents disagreeing 74%.

Women who do not have children or other caring responsibilities are also under represented in the senior ranks

- There is wide disagreement between females and males on this question with proportionally more women than men agreeing or strongly agreeing (66% compared to 46%) and a slightly larger majority of men disagreeing/strongly disagreeing (48% compared to 26%).

Women are under-represented in corporate promotions from the beginning of their careers

- Male perceptions of women being under-represented in corporate promotions from the beginning of their careers are vastly different to that of women. A large majority of females (62%) agree with the statement while an equally large majority of males disagree (59%).

The pay gap in the resources sector is grossly exaggerated

- Per the 2013-14 gender equity scorecard, as compiled by the WGEA, women's average base remuneration across all industries and occupations is 19.9% less than men's<sup>3</sup>.

Companies have taken significant steps to address structural disadvantages in the resources industry so women now have the same opportunities as men

- This response is potentially influenced by the large number of male respondents in senior roles. Perhaps there is an opportunity for organisations to increase the awareness of strategies they have put in place to address this.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-14\\_summary\\_report\\_website.pdf](https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-14_summary_report_website.pdf)

The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 now requires all employers of 100 or more staff to report annually on a range of gender equality indicators, this will prompt organisations to address gender inequality

- Female (50%) and male (52%) respondents agree that the new reporting requirements will help address gender inequality.

## Participation

Q. Please indicate which strategies you believe would be most beneficial to increase the participation rates of women in the resources sector. Scale 1-5 with 1 being the least beneficial and 5 being the most beneficial.

A. The overall rankings were:

Respondent	Average rating
Implementation of flexible work options	3.89
Cultural change	3.80
Professional development and training	3.52
More promotion opportunities	3.42

## Experience

Q. Thinking about your personal experience spanning your career in the resources sector and what you have observed of your female peers, which of the following statements can you identify with.

Respondents	Gender	Yes	No	Unsure
Most women who take time out of the workforce due to caring responsibilities are forced to trade promotion for flexibility	Female	78%	12%	10%
	Male	52%	29%	19%
Men are more likely to put themselves forward for promotion than women	Female	85%	12%	3%
	Male	37%	52%	11%
Qualified women may miss out on the opportunity to work in an executive role due to a lack of confidence to put themselves forward	Female	82%	12%	6%
	Male	34%	46%	20%

Q. Throughout your career, have you observed or experienced differing treatment of female and male colleagues in the following areas:

A. Men predominantly report that they never observe different treatment, while women often do. There is an opportunity for ongoing dialogue in the industry to share understanding and bridge the perception gap.

Respondents	Gender	Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Not applicable
Promotional opportunities	Female	14%	21%	37%	22%	6%
	Male	36%	36%	23%	5%	0%
Treatment in meetings	Female	6%	21%	32%	40%	1%
	Male	39%	38%	15%	8%	0%
Training and development opportunities	Female	26%	18%	40%	15%	1%
	Male	67%	21%	10%	2%	0%
Pay or benefits	Female	10%	19%	28%	41%	2%
	Male	51%	30%	12%	5%	2%
Inclusion in social or other work related activities	Female	17%	16%	25%	40%	2%
	Male	54%	23%	17%	6%	0%

Q. Please indicate the top three issues which you believe should be addressed to promote gender equity in the resources sectors.

A. The following key themes could be draw from the feedback.

- Flexibility – flexible work arrangements, creation of more meaningful part-time positions at senior levels.
- Cultural change – including acceptance of male employees seeking flexible work options, the need for male champions of change, management promotion of inclusive culture.
- Equality – in pay and opportunities, promotion of women to board and executive roles.
- Education, training and development - awareness of unconscious bias, understanding the benefits of diversity, focus on management and leadership skills.
- Promotion – promotion of resources sector at all education levels, greater publicity of female contribution.

## Mentoring

Respondents	Gender	Yes	No
Have you been a mentor in the sector (internal or external to your organisation)?*	Female	41%	59%
	Male	69%	31%
Has being a mentor benefited your career advancement?	Female	31%	69%
	Male	33%	67%
Have you been mentored in the sector (internal or external to your organisation)?	Female	47%	53%
	Male	48%	52%
If yes, has being mentored benefited your career advancement?	Female	60%	40%
	Male	63%	37%
If no, do you feel you would benefit from a mentoring relationship?	Female	76%	24%
	Male	58%	42%
Does your organisation have a structured mentoring program?	Female	31%	69%
	Male	27%	73%
If yes, is it available to both male and female employees?	Female	81%	19%
	Male	80%	20%
Do you have the skills, knowledge and experience to act as a mentor & would you be willing to do so?	Female	56%	44%
	Male	83%	17%

\*If yes, which gender have you mentored?

Respondents	Female	Male
Male	0%	4%
Female	39%	14%
Both	61%	82%

### Commentary:

- It is encouraging to see that even though the perception is that being a mentor has not benefited career advancement, a large number (41% females and 69% males) are still acting as mentors.
- Overall, 68% of respondents said they would benefit from a mentoring relationship.
- The large majority of those without an existing structured mentoring program are from smaller organisations with 43% working for organisation with less than 50 employees.

Q. What is the most important outcome that you would be looking for?

A. Below are some of the key themes.

- Achieving set goals
- Career advancement / Maximise potential
- Broaden networks
- Build confidence
- Challenge thinking
- Share experience / Knowledge transfer

## Professional development

Q. Please indicate what other professional development opportunities are supported by your organisation.

Respondents	Gender	Yes	No	Unsure
Internal leadership programs	Female	56%	32%	12%
	Male	48%	44%	8%
External leadership programs	Female	51%	36%	13%
	Male	68%	26%	6%
Internal technical training	Female	73%	21%	6%
	Male	71%	26%	3%
External technical training	Female	81%	8%	11%
	Male	75%	18%	7%
Conferences and seminars	Female	84%	8%	8%
	Male	97%	2%	1%
Postgraduate study	Female	56%	26%	18%
	Male	69%	21%	10%

## Marketing and communications

Q. How did you hear about WinRSA?

Respondents	Female	Male
Word of mouth	12%	9%
Work colleagues	34%	14%
Media	2%	2%
SACOME	45%	64%
Other	7%	11%

- The responses to this question indicate that WinRSA has been able to successfully leverage off SACOME in terms of marketing and communication.

Q. Please indicate your preference for communication on the following topics.

	Research	Events	Info on programs from other orgs / industry bodies	Articles / stories
Email	70%	83%	68%	67%
Website	20%	9%	18%	24%
Not at all	10%	8%	14%	9%

Q. What style of event is best for you?

Respondents	Female	Male
Guest speaker	40%	46%
Panel discussion	24%	13%
Seminar / Workshop	33%	33%
Other	3%	8%

Q. What event time is best for you?

Respondents	Female	Male
Breakfast 7-9am	22%	34%
Lunch 12-2pm	33%	40%
Evening 5-7:30pm	31%	19%
Dinner 7-9:30pm	9%	2%
Weekend	5%	5%

Q. What event frequency is best for you?

Respondents	Female	Male
Monthly	22%	17%
Quarterly	66%	54%
Half-yearly	12%	29%

Q. Why do you come to WinRSA events?

Respondents	Female	Male
Networking	46%	37%
Continuing professional development hours	16%	14%
Technical information and discussion	33%	20%
Other	5%	29%

## Objectives

Q. Please rank the following WinRSA objectives in order of priority.

A. Overall the objectives were ranked as follow:

Ranking	Objective
1	To work with industry to promote the participation, retention and advancement of women in the Sector
2	To facilitate discussion and understanding of common issues to support women in the Sector
3	To offer networking opportunities for women in the Sector.
4	To collaborate with other groups supporting women in the Sector
5	To provide a forum to discuss progression into leadership roles within the Sector
6	To offer speakers and events for the education and advancement of women in the Sector