



**The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia**

**Diversity in the Western Australian Resources Sector  
Survey**

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## 1. Background

The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia (CME) State Growth Outlook forecasts that the workforce required to meet current growth plans in the minerals and energy sector is expected to reach a peak of over 120, 000 people in 2012-2013.

Operational workforce in WA will continue to grow as new projects begin, with an additional 27,000 operations personnel required in the industry by 2015. It is estimated that over the period to 2020, an additional 30,000 to 50,000 people every year will be employed in other industry sectors as a result of increased minerals and energy activity<sup>1</sup>.

The ability to respond to the rapid increases in demand for labour in the sector will be a determining factor in the on-time delivery of minerals and energy projects. Increasing workforce diversity is a critical strategy in sourcing a skilled workforce. The resources sector is focussed on training and employing those currently under-utilised sections of the local workforce, such as Indigenous Australians and women.

## 2. Purpose

Understanding what is happening in the resources sector is key to developing effective strategies, policies and programs to increase workforce diversity and is the basis for establishing managerial commitment for initiatives.

While there is national data of a general nature available on participation rates of women and Indigenous Australians, there is no Western Australian resources sector specific data available, other than the findings from the 2008 *CME Attraction and Retention of Women in the WA Resources Sector*<sup>2</sup> report which found that on average, women make up 19% of the WA resources sector workforce.

The CME Diversity in Resources Survey has been developed to collect, measure and analyse data on the workforce participation of women and Indigenous Australians in the WA resources sector. Baseline data collected from CME members will be used to guide the development of relevant strategies and appropriate policy responses as well as provide the opportunity for companies to review and benchmark their employment practices and how they impact the attraction, retention and promotion of women and Indigenous Australians in their organisation.

## 3. Methodology

The inaugural CME Diversity in Resources Survey (Nov 2011) provides confidential data relating to the workforce participation of males, females and Indigenous Australians. The survey sample represents close to 50 percent of the WA resources sector workforce.

The survey consisted of 3 parts. The first part of the survey captures the number of male and female, and Indigenous male and female employees in a range of occupational categories in the company's head office. The second part of the survey captures the number of male and female, and Indigenous male and female employees in a range of occupational categories at the company's operational sites. Both part one and part two of the survey also captures the number of employees who are full time or part time/casual. The third part of the survey consists of a series of questions to determine the company's current Equal Employment policies for female participation.

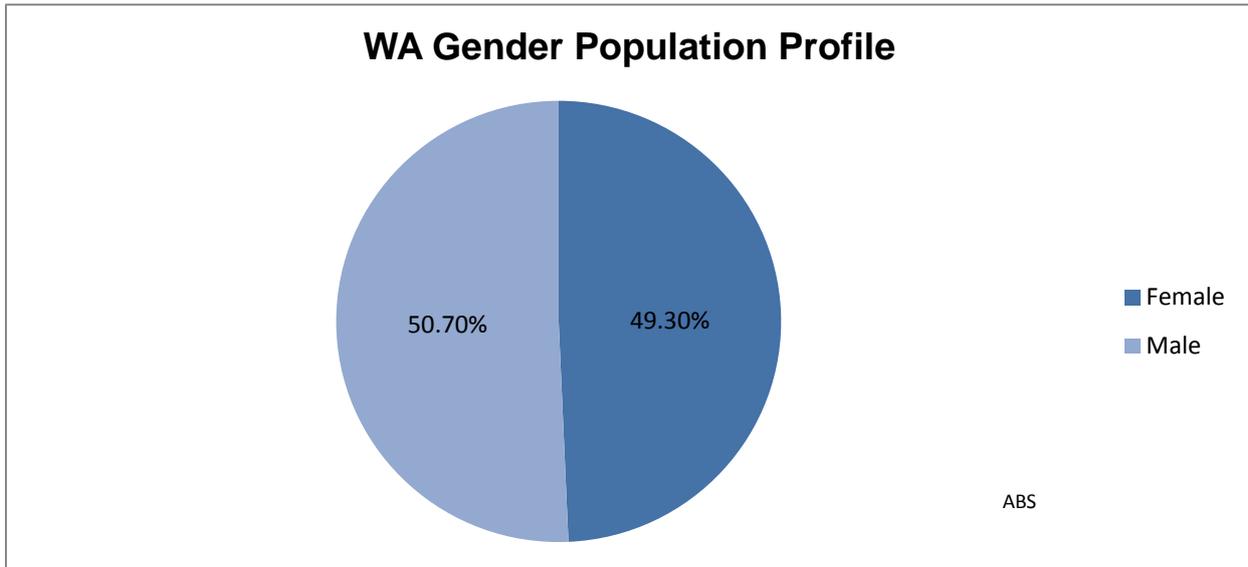
The survey was available as an Excel spreadsheet similar to the requirements of reporting standards to the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA)<sup>3</sup>, to ensure the transfer of data was accurate and consistent. The survey was emailed directly to CME production, contractor, exploration and project development member companies with an invitation to participate in the survey.

#### 4. Data Analysis Summary

Aggregated survey results provide an industry-wide snapshot of Indigenous Australian and female participation rates in the WA resources industry.

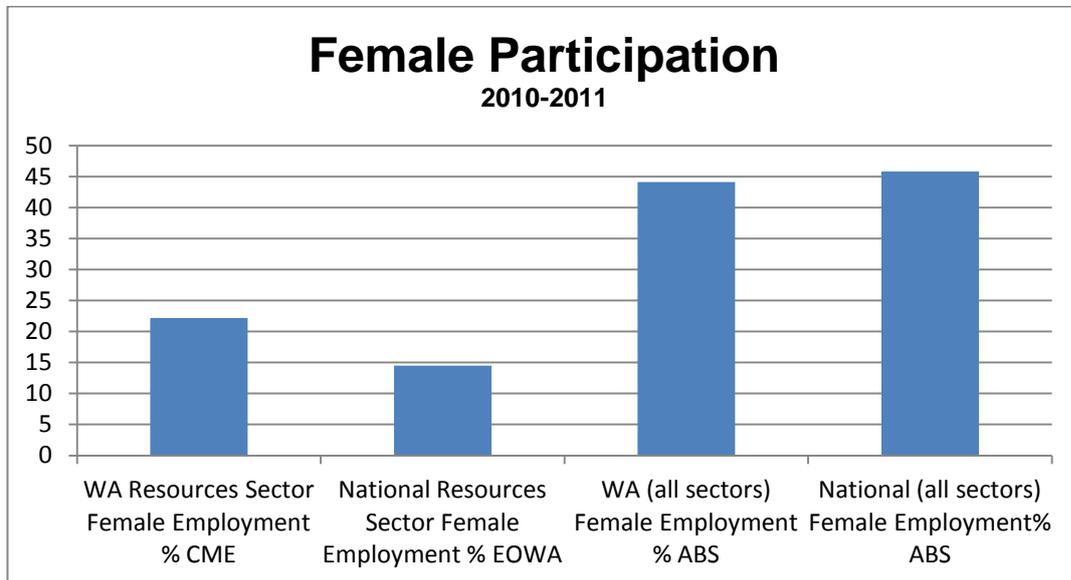
##### 4.1. Female Participation

Western Australia's gender profile shows that females make up just fewer than 50 percent of WA's population.



Source: ABS: Cat. 4102.0<sup>4</sup>

Data analysis shows that in the 2010-2011 EOWA reporting year, women accounted for 22.2 percent of the WA resources sector workforce. This is an increase from the 19 percent reported in the 2008 CME *Attraction and Retention of Women in the WA Resources Sector* report.



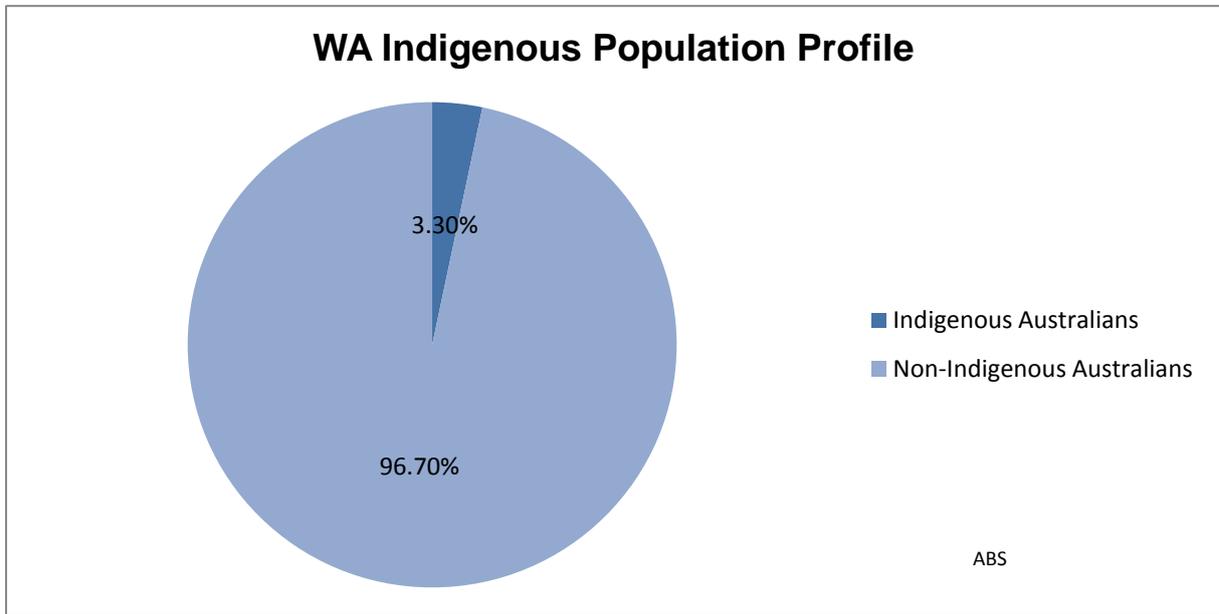
Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>  
 EOWA <sup>12</sup>  
 ABS: Cat. 1367.0 <sup>5</sup>

The percentage of females employed in the national workforce has steadily increased over the last 25 years. Current research supports gender diversity as a business imperative and indicates the increased business performance of organisations or industries that have a workforce that better matches the changing workforce and customer demographics.

Given the participation rates for women in the WA resources sector are lower than for men, there exists a significant opportunity to tap into this group in the community.

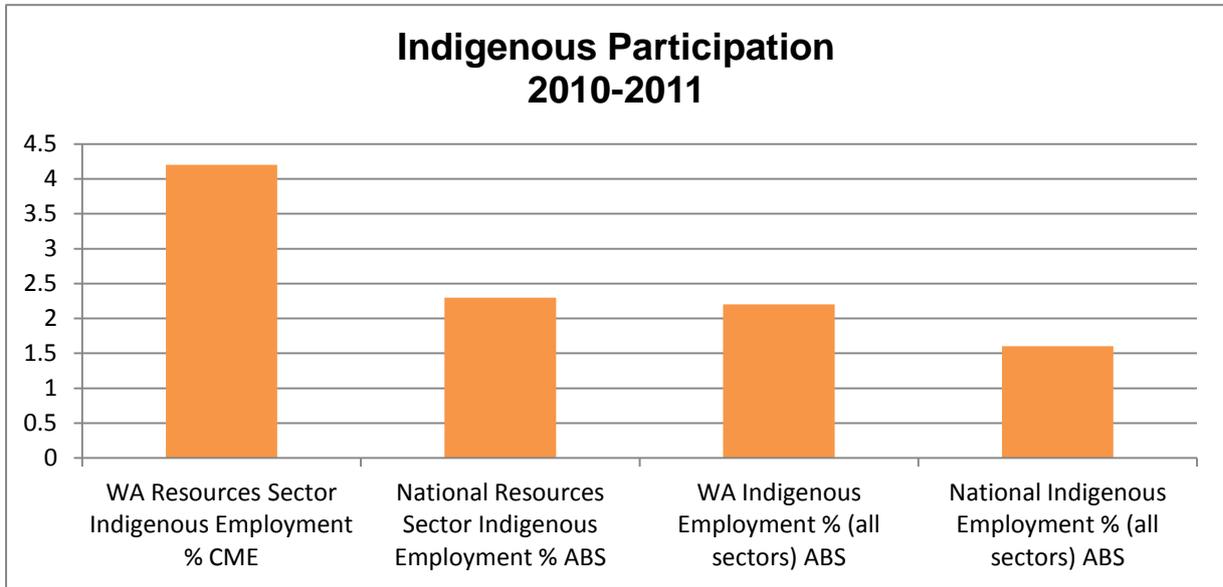
#### 4.2. Indigenous Participation

When compared to the WA Indigenous population profile, where 3.3 percent of WA's population are Indigenous Australians, the WA resources sector is leading the way in utilising a traditionally under-represented group in our community.



Source: ABS: Cat. 4102.0<sup>4</sup>

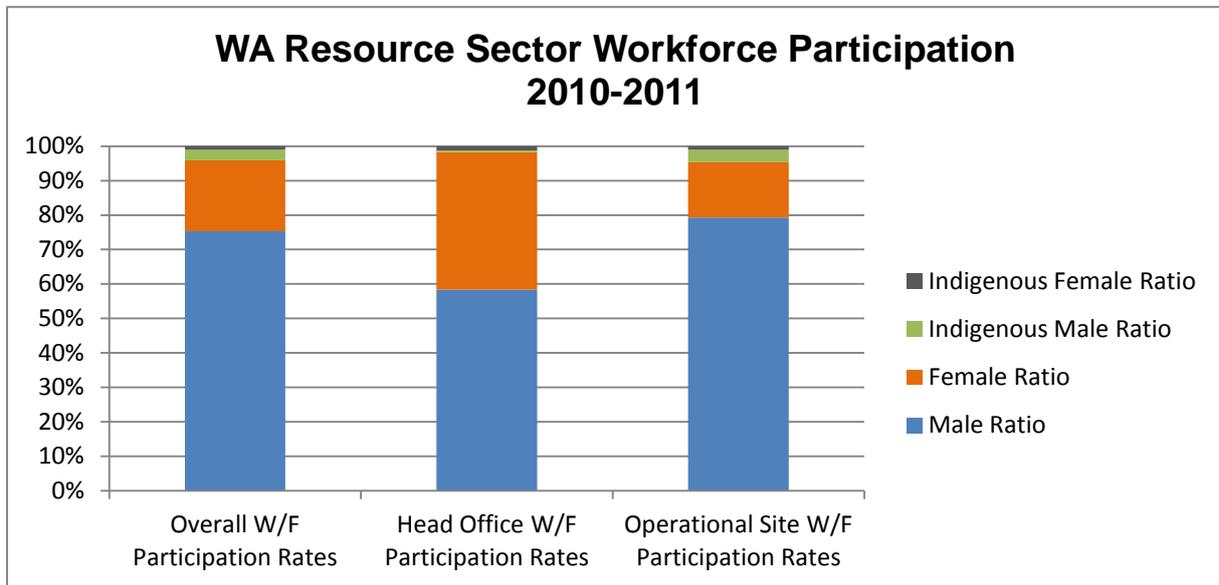
Survey results show that Indigenous Australians make up 4.2 percent of the WA resources sector workforce. This figure, compared with the National Resources Sector figure of 2.3 percent and WA Indigenous employment throughout all sectors of 2.2 percent, highlight the positive commitment by WA resource companies to train and employ Indigenous Australians.



Source: ABS: Cat. 4713.0<sup>6</sup> Cat: 6291.0.55.003<sup>7</sup> and Cat: 6287.0<sup>8</sup>  
CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

### 5. Workforce Participation Ratios

The CME Diversity Survey collected data on the ratio of male and female employees, male Indigenous and female Indigenous employees in the WA resources sector and numbers of employees at head office locations and operational site locations.

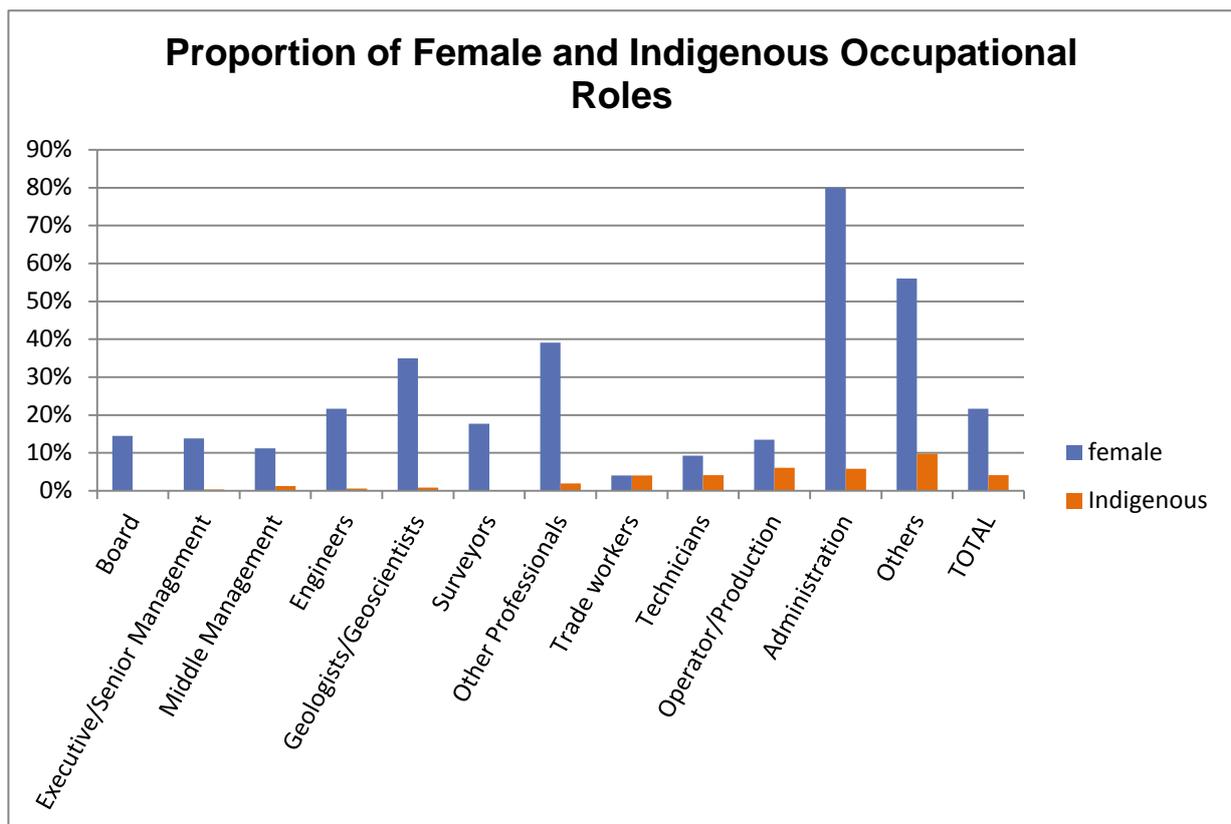


Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

## 6. Employment Roles

Data was collected to provide a snapshot of the roles males, females and Indigenous Australians working in the WA resources sector were performing. There are a much higher proportion of females employed in administration and other professional roles than males. Of the other professional roles, females are more likely to be employed in the fields of human resources and environment. Whereas there are a larger proportion of males employed in management, engineering, operational, trade and technician roles.

When looking at the data related to the types of roles Indigenous Australians are employed in. These are typically operator and labouring roles as well as occupations which didn't fall into any other category.

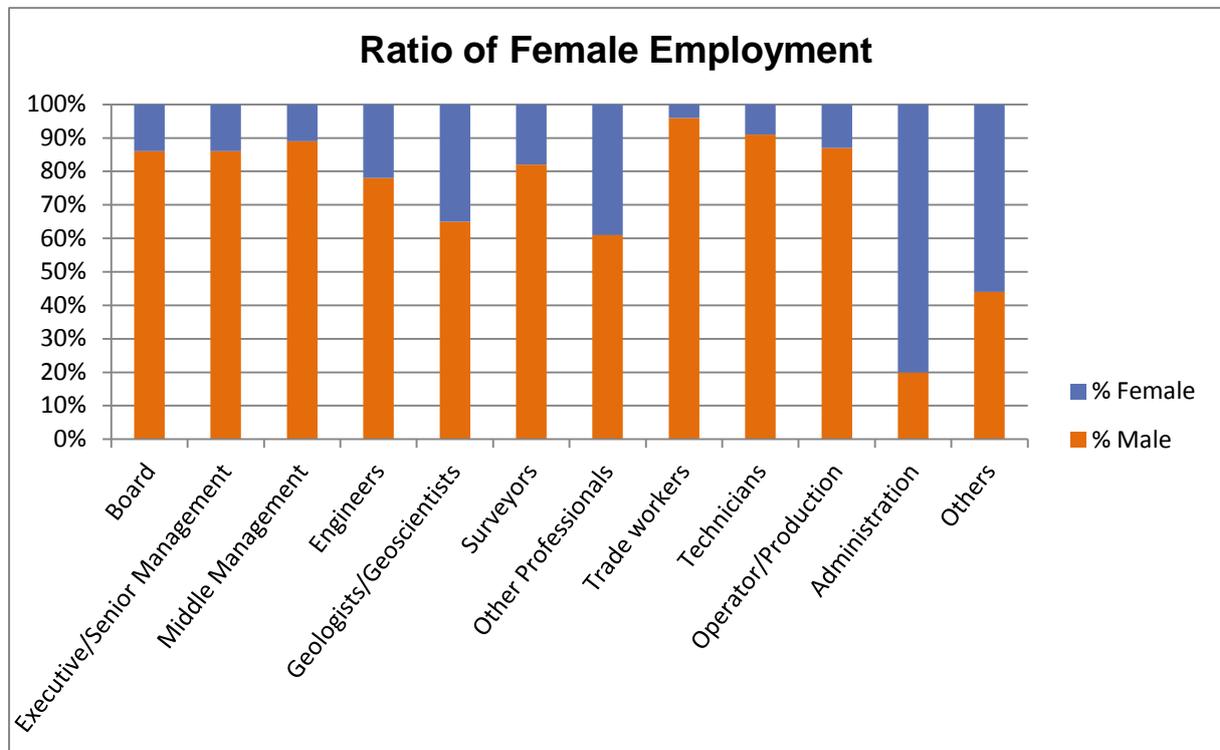


Source: CME Diversity Survey <sup>11</sup>

NB: **'Middle Management'** includes: Project Management, Supervisors and Superintendents  
**'Other Professionals'** includes: *Professional* environmental, health and safety, continuous improvement, human resources, finance (including accountants) and legal roles.  
**'Administration'** includes: *Assistant* finance, human resources, clerical, IT and other administrative coordinators, advisors and assistant workers.  
**'Others'** roles include: Labourers and other occupations which didn't fall into any other category.

### 6.1. Female Employment

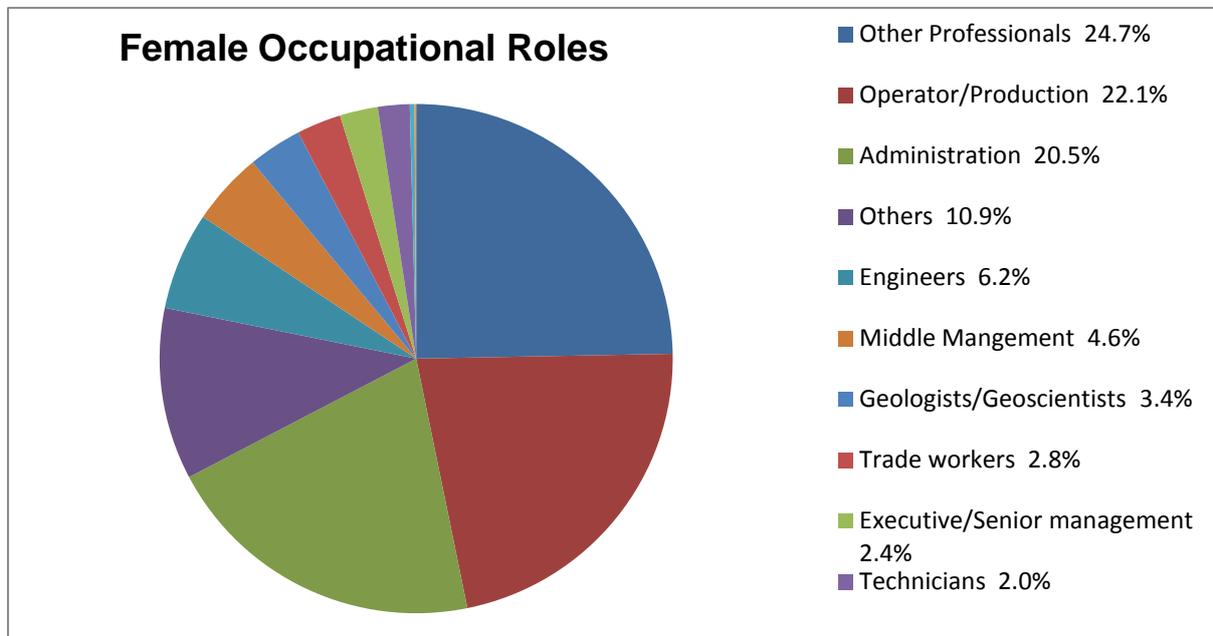
Overall, in terms of the employment role ratio of females in the sector, the data highlights the areas where females are traditionally under represented. These areas include operator, trade, technician, surveying, and senior/executive management and middle management roles.



Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

NB: **'Middle Management'** includes: Project Management, Supervisors and Superintendents  
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**'Others'** roles include: Labourers and other occupations which didn't fall into any other category.

Although the ratio of female to male operators is low, when you look at the data below, relating to the types of occupational roles females hold in the sector, 22 percent of all women working in the WA resources sector work in operator/production roles. Females in the sector are also more likely to be employed as ‘other’ professionals (such as human resources and environment, health and safety, finance and legal roles and administrators).

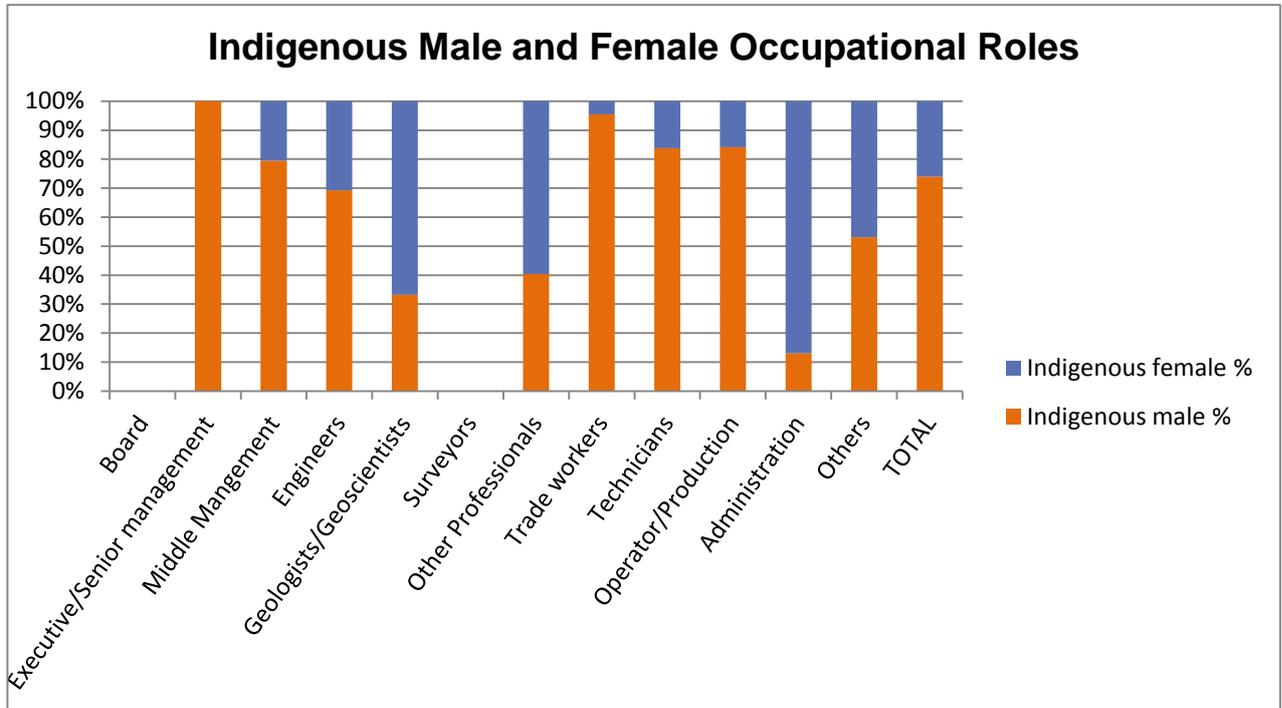


Source: CME Diversity Survey <sup>11</sup>

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**‘Others’** roles include: Labourers and other occupations which didn’t fall into any other category.

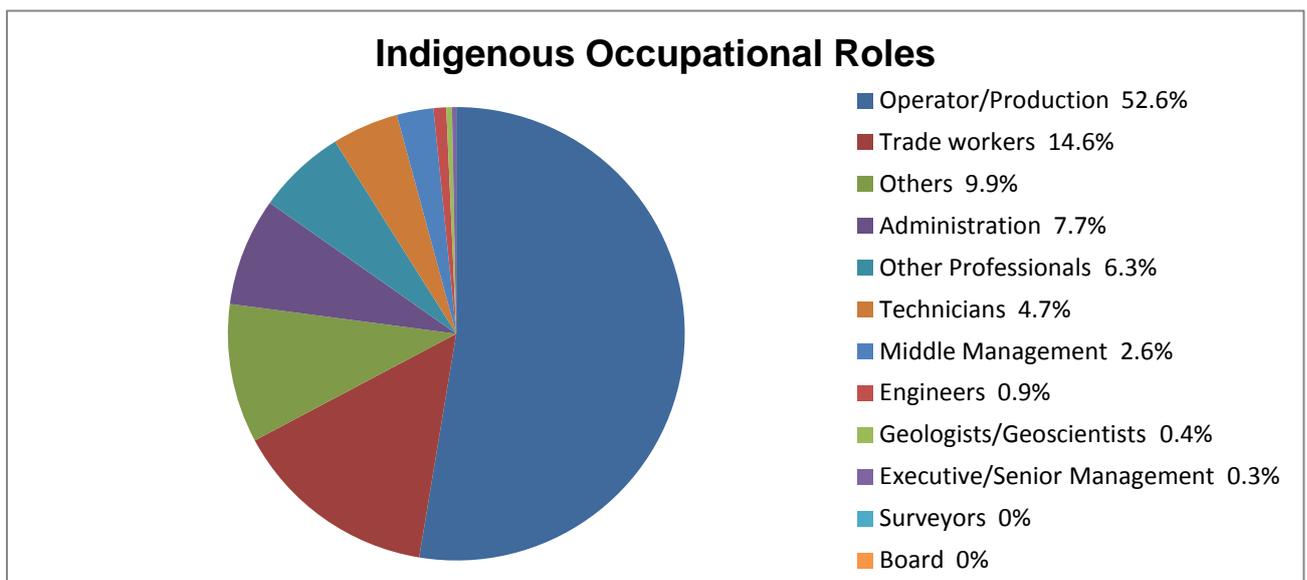
## 6.2. Indigenous Employment

Of the 4.2 percent of Indigenous Employees in the WA resources sector, a higher proportion of Indigenous females are employed in geology, other professional and administration roles. While more Indigenous males are employed in management, engineering, trade, technician and operating roles. This data reflects the role ratio of non Indigenous male and females.



Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

In terms of the types of occupational roles Indigenous Australians hold, they are employed in operator/production roles, significantly more than any other occupational role.

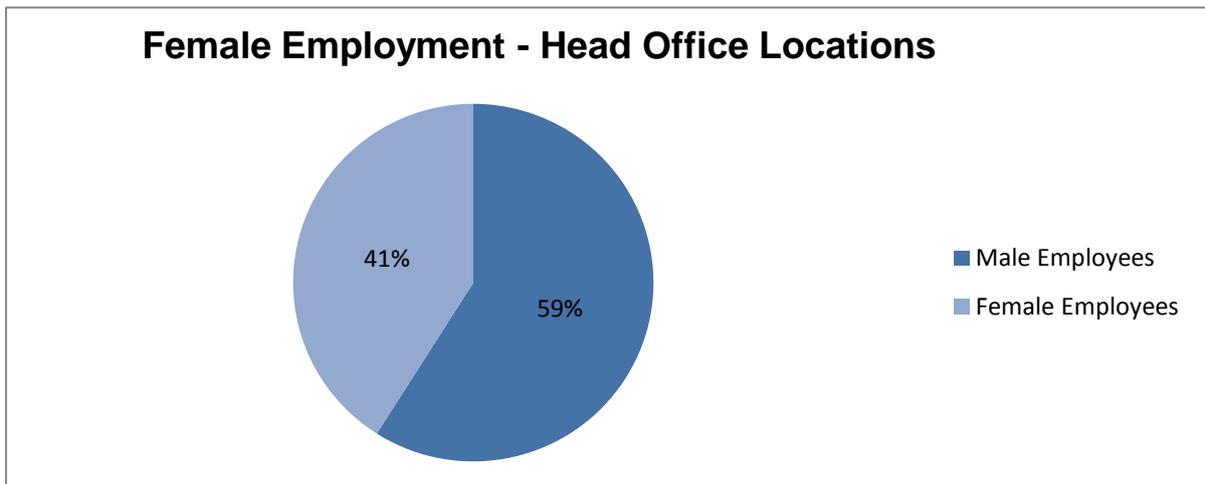


Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

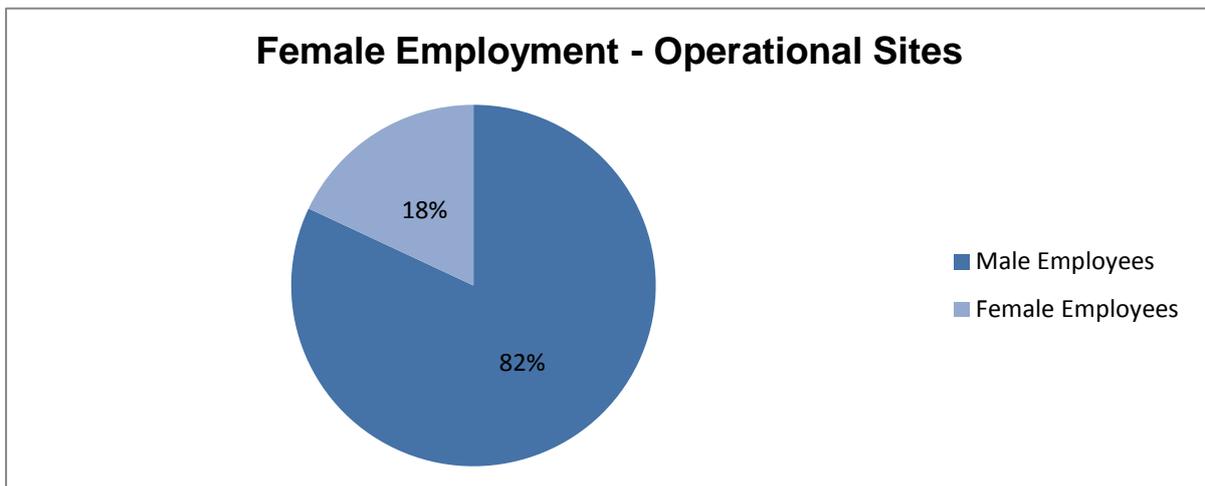
## 7. Employment Location

### 7.1. Female Employment Location

The data indicates there are a higher proportion of females employed in head office locations (approximately 41%) than on operational sites (approximately 18%). With most operational projects in Western Australia operating in remote and regional locations, just over half of the WA resources sector employees work a Fly In-Fly Out roster. Many of the occupational roles located on operational sites include trade, technician, operator, geology, surveying and engineering roles. This location data could suggest that there are more barriers for females working on operational sites.



Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

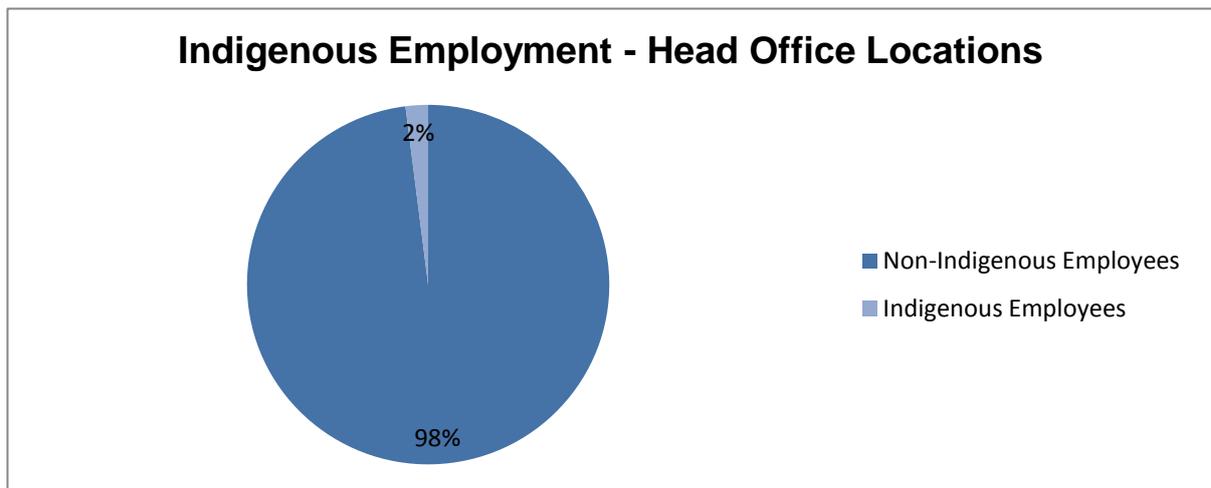


Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

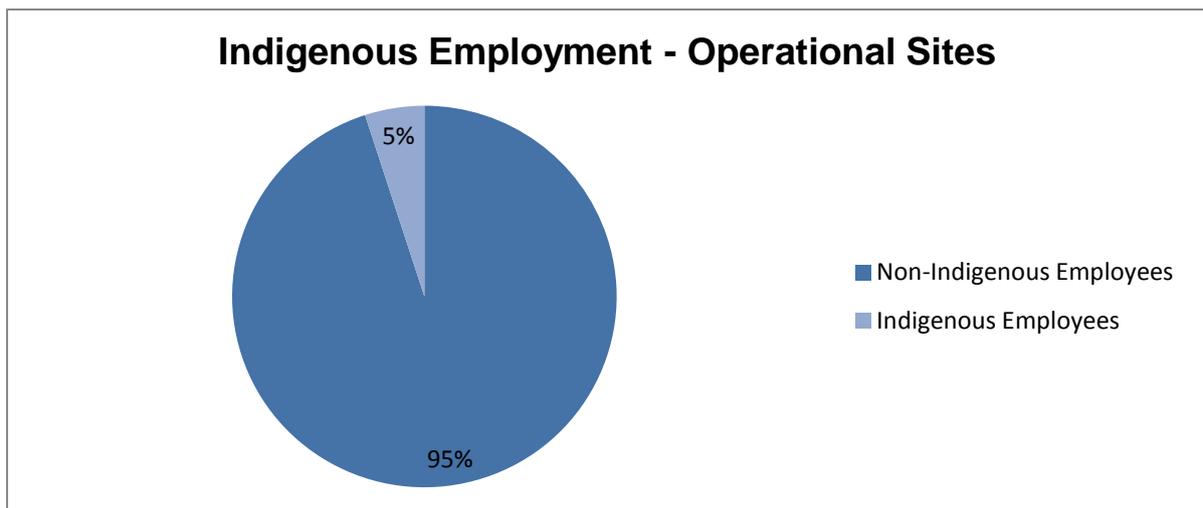
## 7.2. Indigenous Employment Location

Compared with the proportions of males to females in the WA resources sector, there is a larger disparity between the number of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous employees both in head office locations and on site.

In terms of location of Indigenous employment, more Indigenous Australians are employed on operational sites (approximately 5%) compared with head office employment (approximately 2%). This data would seem to correlate with many companies commitment to engaging, training and employing within the local Indigenous community, near their operations.



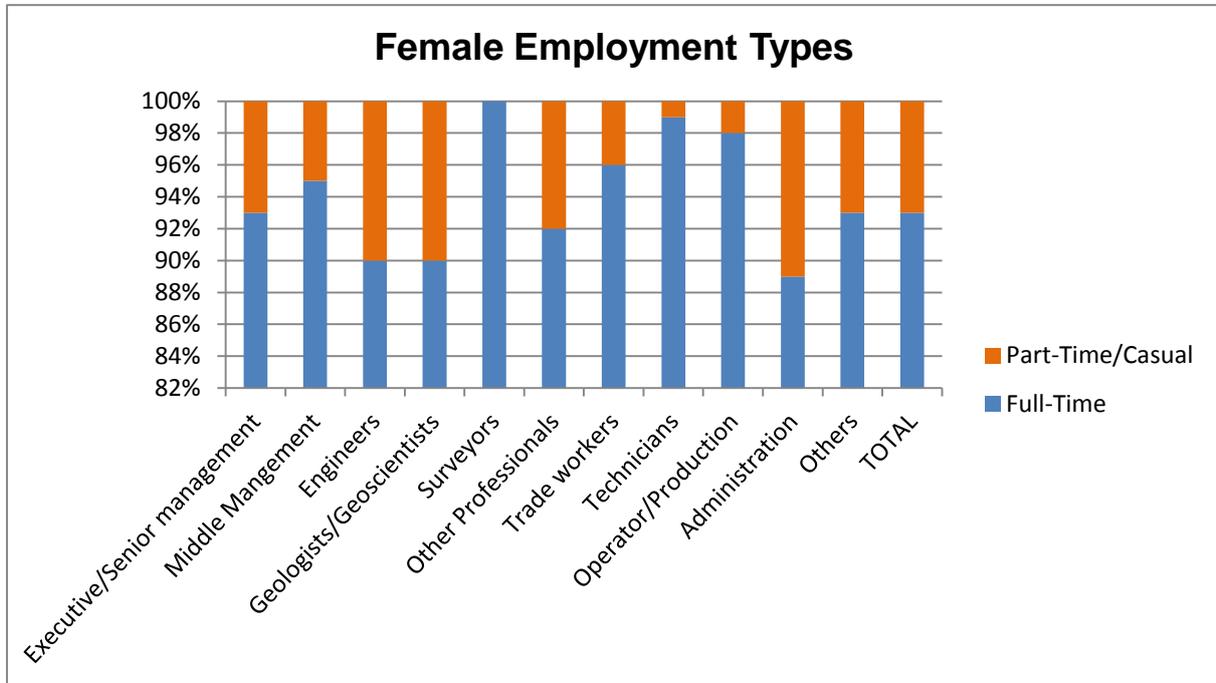
Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>



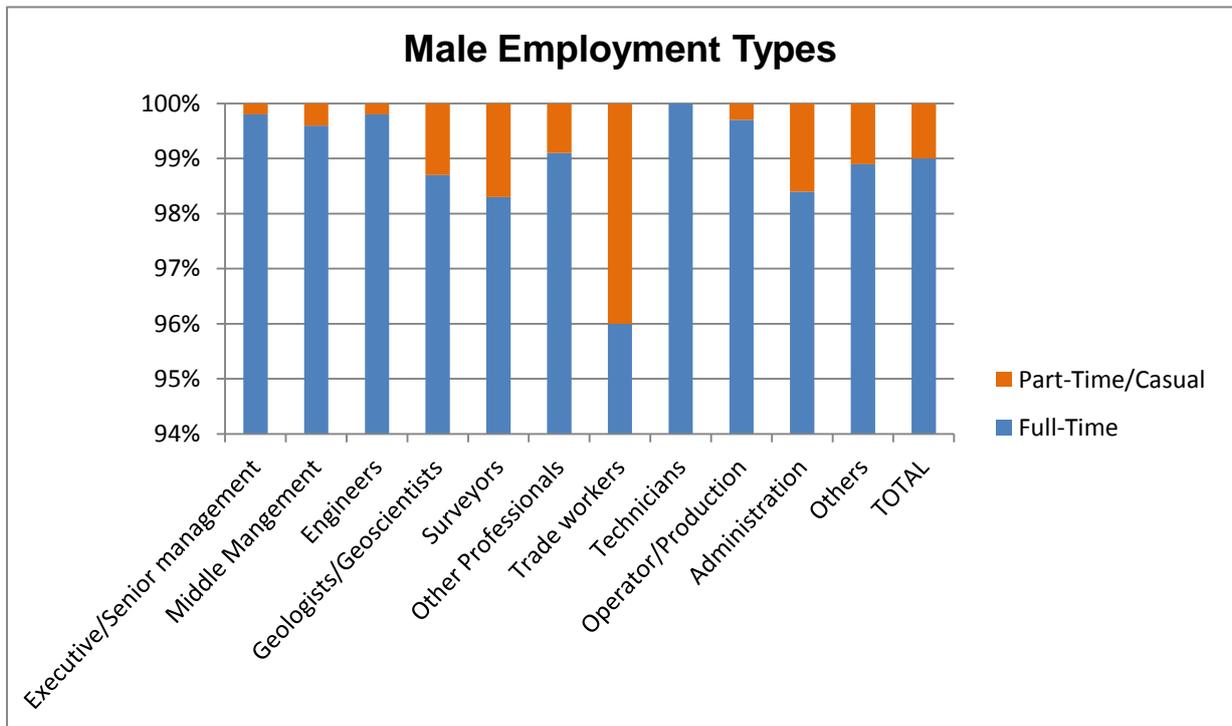
Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

### 8. Employment Types

The survey indicated that in the WA resources sector, the majority of the workforce, both male and female, are full-time employees. The data also highlights that fact that slightly more females take on part-time/casual jobs than males.



Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>



Source: CME Diversity Survey<sup>11</sup>

## 9. Female Attraction and Retention Strategies

Many in the Australian workforce are placing increased value on achieving a balance between work and family responsibilities. Employees' priorities are shifting away from their careers and more towards their families.<sup>9</sup>

Current research indicates women place great value on achieving in many areas of life and define success as achievement in multiple roles including family, personal relationships, work/career and enjoying and experiencing life<sup>10</sup>. EOWA suggests organisations that are aware of employee's commitments outside of work will benefit from improved and ongoing staff engagement.

There are many initiatives and strategies that help to address the work-life concerns of employees and many companies are recognising the benefits of offering flexible work arrangements as demonstrated in the responses to part three of the survey.

The majority of survey respondents have demonstrated they have policies in place to address flexibility, balance, equal opportunity, and harassment issues. Most companies have the options of flexible work arrangements and hours, as well as maternity leave provisions and return to work plans. This would confirm the average return to work rate, following maternity leave, for most companies of 75%.

Half of the respondents indicated they provide either formal or informal mentoring opportunities for females, while the majority have anti-harassment/discrimination policies in place. Most companies have training and career development for all employees and half of the respondents have specifically designed leadership programs for women. Just under half of the participating companies indicated that they conduct an annual pay equity audit.

## 10. Conclusion

It is widely recognised that achieving a more inclusive workforce is good for business. A focus on diversity is critical for addressing the growing challenges of a rapidly expanding industry. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia has conducted the *Diversity in Resources Survey* to provide a current snapshot of female and Indigenous employment in the Western Australian resources sector. The information produced from this survey provides an important resource for member companies, and provides a platform for the WA resources sector to monitor its performance in fostering a more inclusive organisational culture.

To be able to build on to this research and monitor trends in the workforce participation profile of the sector, it is intended that regular surveys are conducted and reported on biennially to assist individual companies and the industry as a whole to understand our diversity performance and the potential for improvement.

CME would like to thank all of the member organisations who took part in this survey for their time and effort. CME look forward to working cooperatively with our members to ensure that women and Indigenous people are an integral part of the WA resources sector workforce.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia. **State Growth Outlook**. 2011
- <sup>2</sup> The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia. **Attraction and Retention of Women in the Western Australian Resources Sector**. 2008
- <sup>3</sup> [http://www.eowa.gov.au/Research\\_And\\_Resources.asp](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Research_And_Resources.asp)
- <sup>4</sup> ABS Cat 4102.0. **Australian Social Trends Data Cube – WA Population**. 2010
- <sup>5</sup> ABS Cat 1367.0. **State and Territory Statistical Indicators**. 2011
- <sup>6</sup> ABS Cat 4713.0. **Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians**. 2006
- <sup>7</sup> ABS Cat 6291.0.55.003. **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly**. May 2011
- <sup>8</sup> ABS Cat 6287.0. **Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Estimates from the Labour Force Survey**. 2010
- <sup>9</sup> [http://www.eowa.gov.au/Australian\\_Women\\_In\\_Leadership\\_Census/2008\\_Australian\\_Women\\_In\\_Leadership\\_Census/Pay\\_Power\\_Position/Pay\\_Power\\_Position\\_Beyond\\_the\\_Census.pdf](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/2008_Australian_Women_In_Leadership_Census/Pay_Power_Position/Pay_Power_Position_Beyond_the_Census.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> Palermo, Josephine. Breaking the Cultural Mould: The key to Women's career success. In **The Hudson 20:20** Series: Hudson Australasia. 2004
- <sup>11</sup> The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia. **Diversity in the Western Australian Resources Sector Survey**. 2011
- <sup>12</sup> Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency. **Women in the Workforce: by Industry**. 2012