

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 24 January 2020

Equal honours still unlikely this Australia Day

In the lead-up to the announcement of the 2020 Australia Day Order of Australia awards, community organisation Honour a Woman and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency are encouraging Australians to keep nominating more women for Australian honours awards.

“Honour a Woman is proud that since we began three years ago, the number of women nominated for an honour has more than doubled,” says Elizabeth Hartnell-Young, co-founder of Honour a Woman. “However, we are still far from gender parity. We look forward to the nomination and selection process including and recognising more women at all levels of the honours system.”

Statistics published by the Governor General's Office clearly illustrate the ongoing gender disparities in the 2019 Australia Day and Queen's Birthday Order of Australia Awards:

- Out of the 31 categories, 28 had more male than female nominees
- Education, Conservation & the Environment and Library & Related Occupations were the only categories with more female nominees
- Four categories had no female nominees at all
- In the Community category, where it might be expected women would be more evenly represented, 59% of nominees were male (772 out of 1313)
- In Sport, 71% of nominees (136 out of 192) and 70% of award recipients (103 out of 148) were male
- In Law, 75% of nominees (47 out of 63) and 73% of award recipients (38 out of 52) were male
- 62% of all nominees (1804 out of 2910) and 62% of all award recipients (1312 out of 2129) were male

“These statistics from last year's Queen's Birthday and Australia Day honours lists show that women's invaluable work in our society, economy and community is still not being properly recognised,” said Libby Lyons, Director, Workplace Gender Equality Agency and an Ambassador for Honour a Woman.

“I'm especially disappointed by the low representation of women in the Law category. The Agency's data shows that women comprise 54% of all managers and 69% of all employees in the legal services industry yet they accounted for only 25% of nominees in this category.

“I urge all Australian employers to recognise the achievements of their accomplished female employees by nominating them for an award.”

“Recognising Australia's female role models benefits us all,” said Carol Kiernan, co-founder of Honour a Woman. “Embedding gender equality into the Order of Australia ensures women of merit don't get overlooked. Let's honour more young women and women from diverse backgrounds for their vital contributions.”

“If you've been inspired by women stepping up as leaders in response to the recent bushfires, nominate them for an Order of Australia,” said Ruth McGowan OAM, co-founder of Honour a Woman and the former Mayor of Baw Baw Shire in Victoria. “We need to acknowledge the significant service of women leaders in our community, local government and emergency support agencies for their outstanding leadership during this difficult and challenging time for our nation.”

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About the Agency: The Workplace Gender Equality Agency is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. www.wgea.gov.au.

About Honour a Woman: Honour a Woman is a non-partisan movement working towards gender equality in the Order of Australia. We seek 50/50 by 2020. www.honourawoman.com

