



S4W believes that lifelong economic well being is a high priority for Australian women – it empowers women to make choices and live independently. It enriches all aspects of women’s lives including their education, health, employment, personal safety and financial security over their lifetime.

SEPTEMBER 2008 UPDATE

S4W has been very active responding to numerous enquiries over the past month including NWS combined endorsement to Government optional protocol CEDAW – Collaborative submission to SDA Act – Gender Pay Equity response etc.

SHAPING THE NEXT DECADE: SUMMARY PAPER EDUCATION & TRAINING WORKING GROUP.

The summary paper has been sent to the following divisions/agencies who have been asked to pass on any feedback to us by 26th September.

- Parenting & Youth Policy, DEEWR
- Early Childhood Education & Child Care DEEWR
- Strategic Policy Branch - DEEWR
- Social Inclusion Unit – PM&C
- Office of Work & Family – PM&C
- Children & parenting Support (FaHCSIA)
- Family safety (FaHCSIA).

PREPARATION FOR CSW53

ONLINE DISCUSSION UNITED NATIONS DIVISION FOR ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (DAW) CSW53

The Network Co-ordinator and other members participated in an online discussion “Women and Men: Equal Sharing of Responsibilities” which was organized by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), which is part of the U.N.’s Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). This “virtual” dialogue was designed to assist DAW in preparing for the 53rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2009, which will consider **“The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS” as its priority theme.**

The next steps in our preparation will see a collaboration between WomenSpeak and S4W who will facilitate two working groups, one in Canberra and the other in Melbourne within the coming month to discuss ways in which the theme can be explored in relation to women in Australia. A summary paper will be sent out to all our members with a request for feedback which will form part of the Roundtable in Canberra between the OfW and NWS on Wednesday 29th October. Finally a combined report will be undertaken and passed onto the OfW by the beginning of December.

OPTIONAL PROTOCOL – CEDAW

The Rudd Government has tabled a National Interest Analysis, which proposes that Australia accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The proposal to accede to the Optional Protocol will now be considered by Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, which will report by 10 November 2008.

Some S4W members are also involved in the funded project to produce a CEDAW Shadow Report. A new project officer has been employed and a teleconference is being held mid September to progress further. As updates come to hand I will pass them on.

SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

S4W in collaboration with NFAW, WIRE and AFUW put forward a submission and five recommendations to the Standing Committee of the House of Representatives Employment Committee to give evidence in relation to the inquiry into the causes of any potential disadvantages in relation to women's participation in the workforce. The submission dealt specially with the current inadequacy of provision in before and after school and school holiday programs for children aged 6-15 years.

The Committee has formally accepted our submission and placed it on their web-site. Additionally it has been forwarded to relevant Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and appropriate senior departmental officials.

In order to obtain significant and relevant data S4W, NFAW, WIRE and WomeSpeak contributed to a NewsPoll survey of OSHC, results of which have been circulated with much interest. WIRE also conducted a survey of unmet demands and member organizations were encouraged to participate via the WIRE website.

The Standing Committee will tour states to take oral evidence as well as accepting written submissions. NFAW/S4W and WIRE expect to hear shortly if they are to attend a hearing.

INQUIRY INTO THE PENSIONS AND TAXATION REVIEWS.

The OfW have asked NWS's to consult and invite submissions to the following important reviews - **Pensions and Taxation Reviews** amongst our members.

The first report of the **Review of Taxation** has been released and can be downloaded from the home site of the Review
<http://taxreview.treasury.gov.au/content/Content.aspx?doc=html/home.htm> AND

The Minister for FAHCSIA has commissioned a parallel review of pensions- details:
http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/seniors/pension_review.htm

There is ample opportunity for individual member organizations to respond directly. S4W, WS and NFAW are currently undertaking submissions. I urge you to either put in your individual submission OR to contact me so your suggestions can be included.

PAID MATERNITY & PATERNAL LEAVE.

S4W and NFAW were successful with their application for funding from Minister Plibersek to hold consultations in all capital cities with women and their organizations on the draft Productivity Commissions report on PM&PL.

Our objective is to assist and encourage women and their organisations to make further submissions to the Commission regarding the options put forward in this draft report.

NFAW will prepare a summary of the Commission's draft report (early October) which will be widely circulated in advance among our member organizations and wider networks. Marie Coleman will travel to each State in Australia between October and the end of November to ensure a wide range of women are consulted and that there is adequate discussion to enable the participants to form a view and respond.

For updates and further information on this topic please access NFAW and S4W websites. www.nfaw.org and www.security4women.com

JOINT SUBMISSION INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SDAct.

S4W members contributed jointly with WS and other organizations to the submission into the effectiveness of the Sex Discrimination Act. As a result (at very short notice) WomenSpeak were asked to appear before the Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee to speak to the submission and were commended in producing the collaborative submission. Brief comments follow:

“Caroline Lambert represented the Network, and gave a comprehensive overview of the submission and was then questioned by Senators Barnett, Crossin and Kroger.

Senator Barnett was interested in our position on volunteers, exemptions for churches and religious schools, and affirmative action measures for men in the teaching profession.

Senator Crossin wanted clarification about the UK Sex Discrimination Act (Recommendation 8), HREOC reporting and connections between HREOC and EOWWA (Recommendation 17).

Senator Kroger was interested in the WomenSpeak Network, the Secretariats model, and the contributors to the submission. Congratulations to the team.

WORKSHOP – GENDER WAGE GAP.

A workshop on the Gender Wage Gap, is being hosted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in cooperation with the Office for Women on 22 September 2008. The aim of the workshop is to help inform key stakeholders interested in the gender wage gap about which data sources are relevant and how these may be used to gain an understanding of this complex issues. Representatives from S4W disaggregated working group and other organizations have been invited to attend. Report will be distributed when it comes to hand. Meanwhile further information on - Pay Equity refer to link below:

(<http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/ewr/payequity/index.htm>)

DELEGATION FROM ALL WOMEN'S FEDERATION OF CHINESE WOMEN

The Network Co-ordinator was invited to speak on behalf of Security4women to a group from the Federation of Chinese Women in Melbourne which was hosted by BPW. The Federation was established in China in 1949 and included the Deputy President and five other members. The women were most interested to hear about our Government and women's organizations here.

ANNUAL PREMIER'S WOMEN'S SUMMIT VICTORIA

The Network Co-ordinator attended the Annual Victorian Premier's Women's Summit, "Women & Money" in Melbourne. Many women's organizations attended who were committed to women's financial decision-making and capacity.

Discussions were led around the relationship women have with money within the context of their life stages and backgrounds. Sessions examined the development of women's skills and confidence in financial decision-making which can contribute towards their financial independence.

The Premier John Brumby, launched two new initiatives. Firstly, September has been named "**Women and Money Month**" seminars and workshops will be conducted specifically for women, and Secondly, "**Ways2work**" and online website and toolkit for parents, carer's and employers.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S SECRETARIATS TELECONFERENCE WITH OFW

The NWS/OfW teleconference was held on Tuesday 19th August. Cate McKenzie is now group Manager, as Julia Bynes is recovering from surgery. Sally Moyle has now taken over Janet Stodulka's position as Janet is now Project Manager of National Plan of Action, Violence against Women and Children and based from Queensland. Each Secretariat gave a brief report on their activities. Minutes of the meeting when available from the OfW will be forwarded to members.

Coming events:

AWE – Conference Cairns 1st – 3rd October 2008

The Association of Women Educators invites you to their bi-annual Conference to be held this October in Cairns. Keynote speakers are Nerida Wilson, Professor Julie Mills and Gina Archer. Please go to their website for full information on Call for Papers and Registration.
www.awe.asn.au

S4W Face to Face meeting 17th and 18th October.

A reminder that the S4W next f/f meeting will be held in Brisbane on Friday and Saturday 17th&18th October. Preparations have begun, and a call for agenda items including possible topics to be worked on for the year ahead, will be called for.

Partnerships for Social Inclusion:

The Director of the Centre for Public Policy, Professor Brian Galligan, would like to invite you to participate in the upcoming **Partnerships for Social Inclusion** to be held on October 15 and 16 and the Grand Hyatt, Melbourne. This conference is a collaboration between the CPP, the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development and the OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development Programme.

Both the **Call for Papers** and **Registrations** are now open. Please contact the link below for further information.

www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference08

Face to Face meeting 2 – OfW and NWS

The final f/f meeting with the OfW and NWS for the year will be held on Wednesday 19th November in Melbourne. Minister Plibersek will attend in the morning at 9.30 – 10.30 am.

On the previous day, Tuesday 18th November S4W will have their last meeting for the year where planning for the future will be explored and discussed. In the afternoon a CSW information session will be held with the other NWS. Further notification as to where the meetings will held will be distributed.

Upcoming WomenSpeak Community Gatherings

WomenSpeak community gatherings and consultations on standing in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women will take place next

Toowoomba (Friday 3 October)

If you would like more information on the planning for either of these gatherings, please contact Shivaun Inglis - email womenspeak@ywca.org.au

Kathy Richards has a healthy baby daughter who arrived a few days ago. Congratulations and best wishes Kathy.

Shivaun Inglis who is based in Canberra, has taken over Kathy's role and can be contacted at the email address above.

Elly Buckley
Network Co-ordinator
Security4women
September 2008