

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **SIZE DOES MATTER! NEW REPORT ON ATTITUDES TO GENDER PAY EQUITY IN SMALL BUSINESS**

Most women workers' expect to receive pay equal to that of a man when doing work of equal or comparable value, whether the work is similar or not, but many managers and owner managers of small businesses are less than enthusiastic about making sure they do so. By failing to explore gender pay equity in their business they may not get the best person for the job, when she is a woman.

In 2011, an online survey of 230 women - with a significant proportion (approx 45 per cent) under the age of 35 years - found that the majority had a good understanding of pay equity and expected equal pay. Furthermore,

- Over 50 per cent indicated that they would feel let down if they found out that the pay system at their place of work was gender unfair;
- 40 per cent would start looking for another job and 5 per cent would resign.
- Almost 80 per cent felt that the government should take action to redress any gender pay gap, with employers and unions also being responsible.

But there is a lack of knowledge about gender pay equity within small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and their managers and owner managers are generally noncommittal about applying a gender pay audit to see if they do discriminate against their women workers by paying them less. These were the conclusions in a report released today in Canberra by economic Security 4 Women (eS4W).

"If managers and owner managers of smaller firms continue to ignore the importance of gender pay equity, we believe fewer women will be prepared to work with them and they will not be able to benefit from the increased participation of women in the workforce" said Sandra Cook, Chairperson of eS4W.

The report, Attitudes to Gender Pay Equity in Smaller Firms was prepared by Professor Rowena Barrett of Edith Cowan University for eS4W.

economic Security4Women is a nationally funded alliance that is advocating on behalf of all Australian women for (SME'S) to improve employment conditions for women, in part by reducing the gender pay gap and providing flexible working arrangements.

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