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Third annual progress report shows Male Champions of Change organisations achieving further advances in driving equality for women in Australian workplaces

The 2016 Progress Report from the Male Champions of Change founding group, which details the extent to which its 15 major Australian employer organisations have made progress towards achieving equality for women in the workplace, was released today.

The 2016 MCC Progress Report uses performance benchmarks to assess the extent to which these organisations, among the largest and most significant employers in Australia, are increasing the representation of women in leadership positions. This 2016 assessment is the third annual report against a newly developed level of disclosure and accountability on gender equality.

The report addresses each of the MCC Action Plan's five themes, which were established by this collaboration of employers in 2012 – Stepping up as leaders, Creating accountability, Disrupting the status quo, Dismantling barriers for carers and Responding to domestic and family violence.

The report finds major advancements were achieved by these MCC organisations during 2016 as follows:

- *In the Eye of the Beholder* report, on de-bunking the myth of merit in workplaces, was released and opened a national conversation on the issue;
- actions were taken by many MCC organisations to support employees living with domestic and family violence, particularly by implementing a three-part model for workplace responses, developed and implemented by the MCC organisations in 2016;
- various innovative initiatives were implemented on gender balance in recruitment, mainstreaming flexible work and normalising care for men; and
- an aggregate 71% of leadership categories across MCC organisations achieved gender balance, or progress towards balance.

Convened by then Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick, the founding MCC group includes 29 of Australia's male leaders – including the Chief of Army, Secretaries of government departments, Non-Executive Directors and the CEOs of many of Australia's largest companies – calling on men to step up beside women and take action to drive gender equality at all levels in their places of work, particularly in senior and executive roles, where women are under-represented today.

"It is important to emphasise that improving gender balance at work is not a women's issue, it is a significant social and economic issue that all Australians are responsible for," said Ms. Broderick. "The Progress Report is an annual opportunity to share learnings, and take stock on progress. There are some significant accomplishments and examples in the report. There are also many opportunities for improvement. The men are not champions because they are perfect role models, but rather because they are committed to taking action to increase the representation of women in leadership. The Progress Report demonstrates their willingness to stand behind their numbers and that they are constantly working to identify what else can be done to drive improvement."

Since inception, the MCC strategy has inspired similar groups across Australia. There are now around 130 MCCs who together employ roughly 600,000 people (roughly 5% of Australia's workforce.)

Progress Report 2016 is available at <http://malechampionsofchange.com/progress-report-2016>

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