

## **Career pathways for Women and Girls: Emergent and Non-traditional Occupations and Industries (Viable Work)**

### **Viable Career Pathways For Women And Girls: Summary**

#### **Preamble**

Given the length of the original, this paper provides a snapshot of the following document: eS4W: WAVE *Career Pathways for Women and Girls: Emergent and Non-traditional Occupations and Industries (Viable Work) Viable indicators, viable work: Selected industries and occupations*. 2011<sup>1</sup>. Information was selected and extracted (February 2011) from Australian Government websites available at: [www.joboutlook.gov.au](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au) and

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/LMI/SkillShortages/Pages/SkillShortageLists.asp>

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#### **Women's Participation in Industries with Identified Skills Shortages and Job Growth**

- ❖ Women are well (or over) represented in some skills shortage and employment growth industries such as Education & Training, Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, and Accommodation and Food Services Industries. However, their positions are mostly located in lower income, part-time and/or casualised jobs within these industries.
- ❖ Women are not well represented in the skills shortages industries of Construction, Mining, Automotive, Locksmith and Telecommunications.
- ❖ Areas with average or higher than average median weekly full time earnings such as Education & Training, Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, Construction, Mining, Accommodation & Food Services, Locksmiths and Telecommunications, and Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services Industry should provide opportunities for women to obtain secure, gainful employment in the future.

Further pressure on the supply of skills is expected in Australia generally, but particularly in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, with ongoing recovery, particularly in the construction and resource sectors (DEWR 2010b).

<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.wave.org.au/>

## Women and Industry Areas

In the five years to May 2010, total employment in Australia increased by 10.6 %. The industries creating the most new jobs were Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, and Construction (SkillsInfo 2010). In the next five years to 2015-16, employment is expected to increase in each of the 19 ANZSIC<sup>2</sup> industries except one<sup>3</sup>. Mining (6.1% p.a.), Health Care and Social Assistance (4.5% p.a.) and Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (3.9% p.a.) are projected to have the strongest employment growth, followed by Construction (3.6% p.a. and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (3.3% p.a.). Manufacturing is the only industry where employment is expected to decline (-0.6% p.a.). The largest employment increases in the five years to 2015-16 are projected to occur in Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Education and Training. Together, the first three of these are expected to provide more than 50% of total employment growth in the 5 years to 2015-16<sup>4</sup>.

### Further comment

Women have benefited from increased employment positions in the **Health Care and Social Assistance Industry**. 79% of employees in this Industry are women, however, 43.6% of these jobs are part-time, highly casualised and have below average income based on median full-time weekly earnings (In May 2009, the average median weekly full-time earnings income for all industries in Australia was \$1000)

Women are also over represented in the **Education and Training Industry** that has good growth history and expectations, as well as strong income potential. Women represent 69.1% of workers, and are employed at higher levels of full time employment (63.5%) than other industries. The Industry also has higher than average median full-time weekly earnings. However, the lowest income areas include a high concentration of women, for example, Pre-School Education Workers.

Women are well represented in the **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services** at 54.4%, with higher levels of female full time employment (27.8%) than in other industries (24.7%). The industry has higher than average median full-time weekly earnings. However, women are concentrated in the lower paid areas of Veterinary Services (below average median full-time weekly earnings), as well as Legal and Accounting Services and Market Research and Statistical Services, areas also more likely to have part-time employment.

At the time this project commenced in 2010, **Retail** employment rates were expected to grow in the next five years. Since that time this industry has been heavily impacted by the Global Financial Crisis. Modest recovery is expected over the next five years. However, women are over represented in this industry (56.2%).<sup>5</sup> A large proportion of this work for females is currently part time (33.8%). Income levels are the lowest of all industries and women are concentrated in the lowest earning areas within the industry (SkillsInfo 2010).

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<sup>2</sup> ANZSIC: Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification

<sup>3</sup> DEEWR Industry Employment Projections 2011 Report <http://www.skillsinfo.gov.au/skills/IndustryReportsCharts/>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Outlook: Retail: <http://www.skillsinfo.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/528BAB6D-5E43-4BC7-9ABC-70F26BFC5B45/0/OutlookRetailTrade.pdf>

**Construction** is the third largest employing industry in Australia (9% of workforce Feb 2011), with a slightly younger workforce than average engaged in mainly full time work. However, it is also the most gender-segregated industry of all 19 industry groups, with male workers accounting for 88.6% of its workforce. Women continue to be underrepresented in the Construction Industry, with the lowest female employment rate of all industries at 11.4%. Women are employed in areas that have lower than average median full-time weekly earnings. Women appear not to be benefiting from the historical and predicted growth of jobs in this industry.

**The Mining Industry's** expected high employment growth rates include a low representation of women at 13.2% of employees. Within this women are employed in Oil and Gas Extraction workforce at 18% and this, amongst all other sectors in the industry has above average median full-time weekly earnings.

**Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services Industry**, the smallest employing industry in Australia (1.2% Feb 2010) with an older than average workforce who enjoy higher than average median weekly earnings<sup>6</sup> is now expected to grow at 3.9 per cent per annum totalling 32 400 new jobs, given '...an increasing focus on green energy solutions and improved recycling services.'<sup>7</sup> In 2010, this industry's workforce was predominantly male (73.8%) and characterised by fulltime work (90.9%). 'Female employment, both full-time (17.1 %) and part-time (4.2 %), was below the average for all industries'<sup>8</sup>. This Industry augers well as offering growing potential for viable training pathways and careers for women, as well as demonstrating the fluidity accompanying increasing awareness of the necessity to shift to low carbon/non polluting sustainable industries and occupations.

**The Automotive Industry** is identified as a skills shortage area, particularly in the occupations of Motor Mechanic and Automotive Electrician. However, there has been and is expected to be, negative employment growth in this industry. Women are highly underrepresented in this industry at 13.2%. This industry has below average median full-time weekly earnings.

**Other reported skills shortage areas:** include Food Trades, Locksmiths and Telecommunications Lines Workers. Women are represented in the Accommodation and Food Services Industry at 55.7%, with most work being part-time. The industry has below average median full-time weekly earnings. Women are highly underrepresented as Locksmiths (8.1%). This industry has slightly above average median full-time weekly earnings. Women are also highly underrepresented as Telecommunications Trades Workers (4.1%) and median full-time weekly earnings are average.

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<sup>6</sup> Outlook: Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services Industry: <http://www.skillsinfo.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/48FF8F3F-931E-4FC0-B16EC91C494B4426/0/OutlookElectricityGasWaterandWasteServices.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> DEEWR 2011 op cit

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

## **Viable Work Futures for Women**

### **Current Contextual Workplace issues:**

- Women are concentrated in feminised fields of work and training.
- Women are under-represented in emerging and growth areas with better than average remuneration opportunities, such as green industries, technology, mining industries and managerial occupations.
- Women are concentrated in casual and part-time work, which makes them vulnerable in times of economic downturn while also providing them with less opportunity for work based training and career progression.
- Women's earnings on average are below those of men.
- Significantly more women than men live in poverty and below the poverty line.

### **Suggested Industry Factors Providing Viable Work For Women:**

- Industries with employment opportunities, supported by identifiable pathways to careers that involve such employment opportunities;
  - skills and expertise recognised in pay levels and work conditions and/or above average remuneration opportunities available;
  - expected growth or the industry/occupation are sustaining themselves;
  - the industry plans for and promotes future needs that include women

While we also consider family friendly work practices and flexible work as essential indicators of viable work for women, the assessment of these factors is beyond the scope of this project.