

CABINET PROCESS FOR BOARD APPOINTMENTS (GENDER EQUITY) GUIDELINES

I Introduction

The Tasmanian Government has a target of equal gender representation on all Government decision-making bodies such as boards and committees, tribunals, panels and foundations (Boards).

The Australian Census of Women in Leadership 2010 found that Australia has the lowest percentage of women on boards when compared with New Zealand, UK, Canada, US and South Africa.

The Premier and Minister for Community Development have agreed to introduce into the Cabinet process a new Tasmanian Women's Register Board Appointment Certification Form (Certification Form) from the 1 September 2011.

The key objectives of the changes to the Cabinet process for board appointments are to:

- encourage agencies to reach the Government targets for gender equity on the Boards they administer;
- assist agencies to suitably qualified women candidates from the Tasmanian Women's Register or by executive search;
- provide Cabinet with information on the existing and proposed gender balance of the specific Tasmanian Government board or committee;
- inform Cabinet of measures taken by agencies to ensure that women have been considered for appointment; and
- provide Cabinet with information on suitably qualified women candidates identified from the Tasmanian Women's Register and related search services.

Without the Premier's specific approval to do so, the Cabinet Office will not accept a Cabinet Briefing for non-commercial board appointments unless the proposed membership meets the Government's target for gender balance or the Briefing includes a completed and signed Certification Form.

Appointments to Tasmanian Government business and state owned corporation board positions are exempt. For further information please refer to the section below on appointments to the boards of government business enterprises and state owned corporations.

2 Tasmanian Women's Register

The Tasmanian Women's Register (Register) is a secure online database of women who have indicated an interest in being appointed to Government boards and committees. The Register assists Government in identifying suitably skilled and experienced women for appointment.

Consultation with the Tasmanian Women's Register is required when considering all board all Board vacancies, including newly created positions. When establishing a new board there should be as far as practicable gender equity, unless the Minister can provide an explanation to Cabinet as to why this cannot be achieved.

The Register is administered by the Community Development Division (CDD), Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Assistance is available to agencies by emailing wt.register@dpac.tas.gov.au or by calling the Register Administrator on 6232 7116.

3 Cabinet Process for submitting Board Nominations

The new process aims to keep Cabinet informed of the progress being made towards achieving equal participation of women on its boards and committees.

There are three components to the new process:

- (1) early consultation with the Tasmanian Women's Register to identify suitably qualified women candidates;
- (2) agency completion of the Tasmanian Women's Register Appointment Certification Form; and
- (3) endorsement by the Tasmanian Women's Register Appointment Certification Form prior to inclusion in the Cabinet Board Appointment Briefing.

In the event of an upcoming board vacancy, the following procedures are suggested:

- a) Contact the Tasmanian Women's Register at wt.register@dpac.tas.gov.au and provide information on the board vacancy and skill set requirements.
- b) Early consultation is advised. Thorough and genuine consultation is required if the Government's target of equal representation of women on boards is to be achieved.

- c) The Cabinet Handbook provides advice as to the requirements for prior consultation when preparing a Cabinet Board Appointment Briefing.
- d) Complete a Tasmanian Women's Register Appointment Certification form for inclusion with the Cabinet Briefing. A template for the Certification Form is available at http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/executive/cabinet_office.
- e) The Tasmanian Women's Register will assist to identify suitably qualified women and provide this advice to the appointing agency. In the event that the Register does not identify any suitably qualified candidates, CDD may also undertake an executive search to identify candidates on request by the agency.
- f) Prepare a Boards Appointment Cabinet Briefing. A template is available at http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/executive/cabinet_office
- g) Submit the Cabinet Briefing and completed certification Form to the Tasmanian Women's Register, CDD. The Tasmanian Women's Register will endorse the Certification Form and provide comment on the measures taken to recruit women, and return the documents to the agency.
- h) Submit the Cabinet Briefing, together with the endorsed Certification Form to the Cabinet Office.

Government Business Enterprises and State-owned Corporations

Executive search firm Amrop Cordiner King has been engaged by the Tasmanian Government to assist in identifying suitably qualified persons for government business board positions. Amrop Cordiner King maintains a secure database where expressions of interest are registered.

A Director Selection Advisory Panel advises the Government on suitably qualified candidates for all Government business director appointments.

Guidelines for Tasmanian Government Businesses Board Appointments are located on the Department of Treasury website. The Guidelines may be accessed at: <http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/DTF/DTF.nsf/v-gbe/E5CCE81E94138D72CA2575FB00830DDC>