

MEDIA RELEASE

**Minister for Community Services
Minister for Women
The Hon. Linda Burney MP**



Thursday, 15 October 2009

CORPORATE CHALLENGE FOR MORE FEMALE LEADERS

At today's NSW Telstra Business Women's Awards, Minister for Women Linda Burney will issue a challenge to the private sector to promote more women to leadership positions.

"It is a sad indictment of the Australian corporate sector that among the top 200 Australian stock exchange-listed companies, there are only four female CEOs. Of these 200 companies, women hold the chair on just four boards and make up 8.3 per cent of board directorships," Ms Burney said.

"The women nominated today for the NSW Telstra Business Women's Awards are great examples of what women can achieve when given the opportunity.

"Putting women into leadership roles makes good business sense – international research shows that companies with the highest representation of women in senior management teams experience a higher return to shareholders than companies with the lowest representation of women.

"Some of the companies these women work for have reaped the rewards of promoting strong, smart and capable women to the top positions.

"I congratulate all the nominees for the NSW Telstra Business Women's Awards – not only for your achievements, but also because the promotion of your efforts will inspire other women in NSW to realise their potential."

Ms Burney said that corporations need to catch up to the NSW public sector, where women hold 37 per cent of positions on government boards and committees.

"While there is more work to do in the public sector, we are making good progress and we have a plan for further improvement.

"*Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women* is the NSW Government's five-year strategy to improve women's recruitment, development and retention across the sector," Ms Burney said.

"The number of women in the roles of Senior Executive Service and Chief Executive Service Officers has increased from 15.5 per cent in 1995 under the previous government to 30 per cent of these positions in 2009.

"Some fantastic women are heading up large government departments including Professor Deborah Picone for Health, Jenny Mason for Human Services, Lisa Corbyn for Environment, Climate Change and Water and Carol Mills for Communities NSW.

"The NSW Government is committed to promoting the equal participation of women in leadership and decision making roles in NSW – we need to embrace the talents of everyone in the path towards economic recovery."

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