

Introduction

This is the 24th *Equity & Diversity Annual Report* of the Reserve Bank of Australia (the Bank), as required under section 9 of the *Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987*.

Approach to Diversity

The Bank aims to embed equity and diversity principles in its work practices and organisational environment. To ensure that these practices remain appropriate and foster an inclusive environment, the Bank annually reviews its workforce diversity profile, the take-up of its existing policies and programs, as well as any relevant external developments. This analysis underpins the initiatives in the Bank's Diversity Plan 2009–2011. The four priorities of the Plan are to:

- gain an understanding of the issues related to work/life balance that are important to staff, and use that information to contribute to equity and diversity policy deliberations;
- better understand the factors influencing the career experience of women;
- continue improving the accessibility of the Bank's computing systems, information and building facilities for its staff and the community; and
- understand the needs of a maturing workforce, and use that information to assist in workforce planning and knowledge retention.

The layout of this annual report reflects these priorities, as well as the need to focus on the 'designated groups' defined in the Act – women, people with a disability, people of a non-English speaking background and indigenous Australians.

Responsibility for Equity and Diversity

The Bank's Equity & Diversity Policy Committee is a consultative body which includes representatives from management, staff, Human Resources and the Finance Sector Union. The Committee makes recommendations on equity and diversity matters to the Governor, and is responsible for monitoring the development and implementation of equity and diversity initiatives, policies and practices. The Committee reports annually on these matters to the Governor. The Terms of Reference for the Committee are set out in the Appendix.

Responsibilities also extend beyond the Committee:

- *All staff* are required to ensure that their actions in the workplace are consistent with the Bank's equity and diversity principles;
- The *Heads of each functional group* are responsible for equity and diversity activities and performance within their areas;

- *Diversity Contact Managers* are responsible for monitoring the implementation of diversity initiatives in their respective departments (which they report to the Committee) and for acting as intermediaries between the Committee and staff;
- The *Accessibility Consultative Group* makes practical suggestions for improvements to the accessibility of computing systems, information and building facilities. Representatives are drawn from relevant departments (namely Systems and Technology, Information, Facilities Management and Human Resources) and other interested staff; and
- *Human Resources* provides specialist advice as well as support to assist in the development and implementation of the Bank's Equity & Diversity Program.

Promoting Awareness

For equity and diversity principles to be integrated into all work practices, staff must be well informed about the Bank's diversity-related policies and relevant legislation. There are a number of ways in which the Bank strives to achieve this. These include:

- ensuring that all staff and managers are appropriately trained in their equity and diversity responsibilities via face-to-face and online programs. These programs are regularly reviewed and updated. During the reporting period, staff completed online training on 'Workplace Behaviour' which reviews expected behaviour under anti-discrimination legislation and contains information about the Bank's Diversity Program. All staff were also required to complete an updated 'Code of Conduct' online activity, which explained the Bank's expectations about behaviour in the workplace;
- promoting the grievance contact officers' network, with the addition of new members. Training support on handling grievances was also provided to the grievance contact officers;
- conducting awareness sessions on diversity-related issues and publishing topical articles in the monthly staff magazine, *Currency*;
- making equity and diversity-related policies, support and resources accessible on the redesigned intranet page;
- communicating any policy changes via the staff newsletter, *Staff Matters*; and
- making available on the intranet diversity-related resources, such as the Bank's Diversity Plan, the *Equity & Diversity Annual Report*, recordings of training workshops and guides for staff on diversity matters such as accessibility.

To help keep up to date on external equity and diversity matters, the Bank participated in various activities of the Diversity Council Australia, an independent, not-for-profit diversity advisor to businesses in Australia. During the year the Bank became a member of the Australia Network on Disability, a not-for-profit organisation which aims to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of employment.

Data Collection

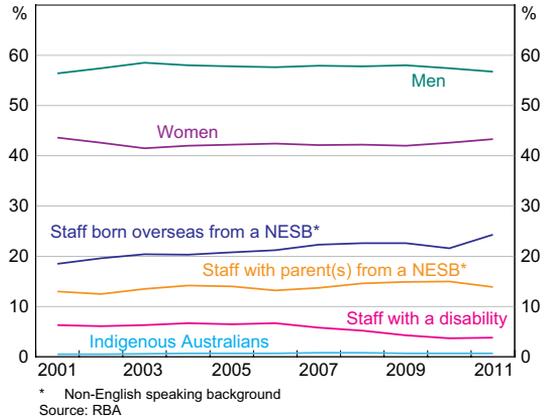
Equity and diversity information is sought from staff when they commence employment at the Bank. It is provided on a voluntary basis and includes information on disability, ethnic origin and proficiency in languages other than English. The Bank's equity and diversity statistics are based primarily on these data. During the reporting period all staff were asked to review and update their diversity profile.

The Bank's job application form was modified to include a reference to the *Equity & Diversity Annual Report* as well as an equity and diversity questionnaire. It is anticipated that this questionnaire will allow the Bank to acquire a better understanding of the diversity of applicants and cater for any reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process.

The Reserve Bank's Diversity Profile

At the end of June 2011, the Bank employed 1010 staff¹, which is comparable to a year ago. Most diversity groups have maintained a fairly constant share of employment at the Bank over the past decade (Graph 1). The exception to this has been an increase in staff from a non-English speaking background. Further information is provided in the Diversity Initiatives and Profile section of this report.

Graph 1
Diversity Profile at the RBA
 Per cent of total staff, as at June



¹ Includes locally employed representative office staff based in London and New York.

