

Introduction

This is the 25th *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 that they 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 underpinned the initiatives in the Bank's *Diversity Plan 2009–2011*. The four priorities of the Plan were to:

- gain an understanding of the issues related to work-life balance that are important to staff, and to 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
- 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. A new Diversity Plan, covering 2012–2015, has been compiled and will be reviewed in the next reporting period.

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 and its membership are set out in the Appendices.

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 *Head of each department* is 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 of this body are drawn from relevant departments (namely Systems & Technology, Information, Facilities Management and Human Resources) and other interested staff.
- *Human Resources* provides specialist advice as well as support to assist in the development and implementation of the Bank's 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:

- Making equity and diversity awareness part of the induction process, which includes issuing the Bank's Code of Conduct to all new starters and a presentation to the Bank's graduate recruits each year.
- 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, all staff completed online training on the Code of Conduct, which reviews expected behaviour in the workplace, with reference to anti-discrimination legislation. The Bank also spent some time reviewing unconscious bias training programs for inclusion in the diversity training schedule.
- Promoting the Grievance Contact Officer network with the addition of new members.
- Conducting awareness sessions on diversity-related issues, publishing topical articles in the monthly staff magazine, *Currency*, and advertising events in the weekly communications publication, *This Week*.
- Making equity and diversity related policies, programs and resources accessible on the intranet.
- Communicating any policy changes via the newsletter, *Staff Matters*.
- 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.

In order to 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 adviser to businesses in Australia. During the year, the Bank renewed its membership with the Australian Network on Disability (a not-for-profit organisation which aims to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of employment), and also joined a diversity network, the NSW Equal Employment Opportunity Practitioners' Association.

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, a data collection mail-out to staff resulted in around 10 per cent of staff updating their diversity profile.

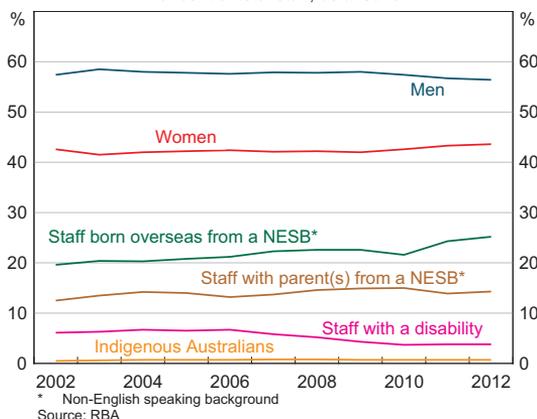
For potential employees of the Bank, the job application form contains an equity and diversity questionnaire, which allows the Bank to acquire a better understanding of the applicants from a diversity perspective, and any reasonable adjustment requirements, during the recruitment process.

During the year, the Equity & Diversity Policy Committee commissioned a number of focus groups to explore equity and diversity related matters in more detail. To do so, it randomly selected staff across different age, gender, ethnicity, and management bands to participate in the focus groups, which were conducted by an external facilitator. The data collected during the focus groups has been used in constructing the Bank's new *Diversity Plan 2012–2015*.

The Reserve Bank's Diversity Profile

At the end of June 2012, the Reserve Bank employed 1 051 staff,¹ an increase of 4 per cent from a year earlier. 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 Section 2 of this Report.

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



¹ Includes locally employed staff in overseas offices.

