



THE HON VERITY FIRTH MP

NSW Minister for Education and Training

NSW Minister for Women

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC
Chair
Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear *Robyn,*
Chair

As requested at the Budget Estimates Hearing for the Women's portfolio on Wednesday 15 October 2008, please find enclosed a copy of the NSW Labor Party Election 2007 document *Better Services for Women*.

Yours sincerely

Verity Firth MP
Minister for Women

Encl: 'Better Services for Women'

MORRIS IEMMA

More to do but we're heading in the right direction



NSW ELECTION 2007

Better services for women





BETTER SERVICES FOR WOMEN

The opportunities available to women and girls in our society should be determined by merit, need and choice alone.

But despite considerable progress, it is an ideal that remains to be completely fulfilled.

We have made substantial progress in giving women the chance to be leaders and decision-makers, with appointments to government boards, committees and senior executive roles, as well as school principals and magistrates, all at record levels.

But we also recognise that for the vast majority of women, what really counts is securing progress on the issues that matter day-to-day.

That is why three of our most important priorities are assisting women to balance work and family commitments, providing targeted help to families under stress, and doing more to tackle violence against women.

We are proud of our achievements to date but we recognise there is still more to be done.

This policy document charts our plans for the next four years towards building an equitable, inclusive and safe society where all women are valued and respected.

Our work will not be done until each child's future can be judged on ability and character, not gender.

Improving services for women and giving women more opportunities to pursue personal and professional interests will remain a fundamental commitment for a re-elected lemma Government.

MAKING REAL PROGRESS

Labor's achievements for women:

Respect and Responsibility: Creating Safe Communities

- ✓ Implementing the *NSW Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women* to promote community awareness and reduce tolerance of violence against women.
- ✓ Launched new programs to help victims of domestic violence including providing assistance through court proceedings, increased funding for counselling and support services and case management teams to provide early intervention and legal support.
- ✓ Improved accommodation options for women escaping domestic violence including an increase in the number of homes available for use as crisis accommodation.
- ✓ Introduced standard non-parole periods for a range of sexual offences and increased the maximum penalties for sexual assault to 25 years and for sexual assault in company to imprisonment for life.
- ✓ Developed strategic partnerships to encourage employers to introduce initiatives to prevent domestic and family violence and workplace violence.
- ✓ Worked with sporting codes to focus sport-industry attention on respectful behaviour towards women.

Healthy Women

- ✓ Reviewed and developed a strategic approach to women's health to promote healthier lifestyles and address specific health issues.
- ✓ Developed the *Lady Killer- why risk it?* anti-tobacco campaign aimed at reducing smoking rates in women, in conjunction with the Cancer Council.
- ✓ Funded projects to promote and improve breast-feeding services for disadvantaged mothers.
- ✓ Expanded the birthing service at St George Hospital to offer homebirths as an option and delivered mid-wife led maternity services at Ryde, Belmont, Shellharbour and Wollongong hospitals.

Women in Business

- ✓ Assisted over 5,000 women to manage and grow their own businesses and their regional economies through the *Women in Business Mentor Program*, the *Women in Business Regional Program* and the *Women in Business Growth Strategy Workshops*.

Work and Family Balance

- ✓ Promoted flexible work policies and family friendly workplaces and developed guides to assist employers and employees: *Family Friendly Ideas for Small Business and Employment Essentials: Introducing Workplace Flexibility*.
- ✓ Opposed the Federal Government's *WorkChoices* legislation which affects working families, particularly mothers.
- ✓ Passed new laws to protect frontline public servants, including childcare workers, nurses, ambulance officers and TAFE teachers, many of whom are women.
- ✓ Supported research into how carers, the majority of whom are women, balance their caring responsibilities and paid employment.

Women in Leadership

- ✓ Increased the number of women in leadership positions including an increase in the number of judges to 30% and school principals to 44% in primary schools and 32% in high schools.
- ✓ The total number of women appointed to public sector boards and committees reached 37%.
- ✓ Provided assistance to women elected to local government through the *Promoting Diversity in Leadership in Local Government Project* and *Hands Up for Women in Council* information kit.

Aboriginal Women

- ✓ Developed the *Sistaspeak* program for Aboriginal girls in NSW focusing on self-esteem, safe families, culture, leadership and economic independence.
- ✓ Delivered through TAFE a number of education programs specifically targeting Aboriginal Women.
- ✓ Developed the Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Strategy.

Rural Women

- ✓ Funded the NSW *Supporting Women in Rural Areas with Breast Cancer Project*.
- ✓ Delivered the *Women in Business Regional Program* giving women in rural areas, practical strategies and business skills to develop and operate their own business.
- ✓ Developed the initiative *Credit Where Credit's Due*, to recognise the skills of farming women, leading to a nationally recognised qualification in Agriculture (Rural Business Management).

Older Women

New and expanded services: Better services for women

- ✓ Provided three women's only TAFE qualifications that support women entering or re-entering the workforce after breaks as primary carers for children.
- ✓ Funded a number of projects targeting violence against older women through the *NSW Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women*.

Girls and Young Women

- ✓ Launched the *Lucy Program* which provides mentoring for young women enrolled in business, law and management studies at university.
- ✓ Developed and expanded the *Girl Savvy* program which provides one day workshops throughout NSW for girls aged 14-18 years and aims to alert young women to the benefits of good financial planning.
- ✓ Continued to implement the *Girls and Boys at School, Gender Equity Strategy*.
- ✓ Provided grants for disadvantaged young women to increase their motivation to stay at school and provided assistance so that they can enrol in education and training courses.
- ✓ Developed a project with collaboration from a number of schools to encourage more girls to become involved in Information Technology and to consider it as a career option.
- ✓ Delivered the *JumpStart: Women* course in partnership with the NRMA, into a number of TAFE colleges to address skill shortages by encouraging women in the automotive industry.

Women in Sport

- ✓ Conducted the *Women's Sport Leaders Scholarship Program* in each region of NSW and awarded more than 320 scholarships.
- ✓ Developed a Gender Equity Standards Framework and Guidelines to assist State Sporting Organisations to increase the number of women and girls as decision makers, participants, coaches, administrators and officials in paid or volunteer positions.
- ✓ Delivered a number of 'come and try' sports clinics to introduce girls to a range of new sports, including predominantly male sports such as surfing and football.
- ✓ Established a girls' cricket development squad at the Illawarra Academy of Sport for girls under the age of 17 years, with a pathway to the Australian women's cricket team.

MAKING REAL PROGRESS

In just 18 months we have:

Respect and Responsibility: Creating Safe Communities

- ✓ Announced the development of a new comprehensive domestic and family violence strategy.
- ✓ Amended the *Bail Act 1978* to provide additional support and protection for women who face repeated incidents of domestic and family violence.
- ✓ Introduced a raft of new initiatives to improve courts' responses to sexual assault victims.

Healthy Women

- ✓ Increased overall breast screening funds by \$5 million a year, enabling an extra 35,000 women across NSW to obtain an appointment.

Work and Family Balance

- ✓ Increased paid maternity and adoption leave from 9 weeks to 14 weeks at full pay or 28 weeks at half pay and introduced paid parental leave of 1 week at full pay or 2 weeks at half pay to public sector employees.
- ✓ Delivered significant pay increases to childcare workers and librarians, the majority of whom are women.
- ✓ Launched the \$85.2 million Preschool Investment and Reform Plan, guaranteeing an extra 10,500 children subsidised preschool places to bring levels of attendance at preschool programs in NSW to 95%.

Girls and Young Women

- ✓ Launched the *Young Women's Leadership Partnership Project* with the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd, which provides mentoring, training and opportunities for young women from Western Sydney.

Women in Sport

- ✓ Developed and run throughout the State a workshop called *Sportswomen – Get Out In Front!* which teaches promising young sportswomen, and their coaches and parents media and sponsorship skills.
- ✓ Jointly funded a scholarship program aimed at developing the coaching skills of women involved in NSW Yachting clubs or associations.
- ✓ Jointly funded the *Women in Motor Sport* scholarship enabling a young woman to attend an international and domestic motor racing competition as a member of the Australian pit crew.

THE RIGHT DIRECTION

A re-elected Iemma Government will:

Respect and Responsibility: Creating Safe Communities

- ✓ Roll out the funding package of the comprehensive new domestic and family violence strategy, and announce additional measures to support the strategy.
- ✓ Develop further options for the management of court procedures with particular concern for victims of crime.
- ✓ Further develop appropriate court facilities for the victims of crime.
- ✓ Spend \$17 million for services to assist vulnerable and at risk families, including those at risk of domestic and family violence.
- ✓ Continue the roll out of the early intervention services for families at risk across NSW.

Healthy Women

- ✓ Develop a Women's Health Implementation Plan in order to implement the recommendations of the review of the NSW strategic approach to women's health. The Plan will aim to reduce the health inequities for women in NSW and set the strategic direction for women's health services.
- ✓ Provide \$11.1 million over four years to open six new breast screening centres on the Central Coast and at Wagga Wagga, Albury, Port Macquarie, the North Coast and The Hills and to upgrade equipment at existing locations.
- ✓ Provide new neonatal intensive care cots at John Hunter, the Royal Hospital for Women, Liverpool, Nepean and Royal North Shore hospitals.
- ✓ Continue work on the \$31.709 million redevelopment of the Women's Health and Newborn Care Centre at Westmead.
- ✓ Continue to roll out the five year \$1.2 billion program of services and strategies aimed at preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect, supporting families, and preventing family breakdown.
- ✓ Spend \$263.6 million to build strong families and communities, deliver supported accommodation for people in crisis and provide disaster response services.
- ✓ Spend \$203.2 million for early intervention programs and childcare services.



Work and Family Balance

- ✓ Continue to oppose the Federal Government's WorkChoices legislation and work to protect the working conditions of NSW families.
- ✓ Develop strategies to increase the awareness of young women workers about key industrial rights.
- ✓ Continue work under the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) National Reform Agenda to improve early childhood development outcomes and support for women's workforce participation.
- ✓ Move to regulate Out of School Hours Care services.

Women in Leadership

- ✓ Further develop strategies across the range of Government agencies to make the best use of the potential of women employees.
- ✓ Continue to increase the proportion of women in Chief Executive Officer and Senior Executive Service positions.
- ✓ Work to increase the appointment of women to boards and committees.
- ✓ Continue to seek advice and input from the Premier's Council for Women, an independent expert advisory committee.

Women in Business

- ✓ Ensure that Home-Based Business Week is an annual event.
- ✓ Conduct further Women in Business Mentor Programs, Women in Business Regional Programs and Women in Business Growth Strategy Workshops.

Aboriginal Women

- ✓ Make the safety and protection of Aboriginal women and children a key priority in the new domestic and family violence strategy.
- ✓ Roll out the *SistaSpeak* program across NSW.
- ✓ Continue to deliver, through TAFE Colleges, culturally appropriate training customised to meet the needs of Aboriginal women.
- ✓ Expand the Intensive Family Based services, aimed at keeping Aboriginal families together, to programs at Blacktown and Campbelltown.
- ✓ Support a partnership project which will enhance antenatal and postnatal supports to Aboriginal women affected by drug and alcohol misuse.

Rural Women

- ✓ Build or rebuild breast screening centres, on the Central Coast and the North Coast and in Wagga Wagga, Albury and Port Macquarie.

- ✓ Continue to provide recognition programs for rural women that support their entry into training with TAFE NSW and lead to improved and sustainable employment for rural women.
- ✓ Publish the *Daring to Dream* internet project stories as a hard copy book and continue to research and collect new stories for the internet site.
- ✓ Continue the successful Women in Business Regional Program.
- ✓ Continue to coordinate and provide funding for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation annual NSW Rural Women's Award.

Older Women

- ✓ Maintain the delivery of women only programs through TAFE NSW to ensure mature age women have access to education and employment opportunities that are specific to their learning needs.

Girls and Young Women

- ✓ Release a new Boys' and Girls' Education Policy for NSW Government schools.
- ✓ Strengthen links between education, industry and community sectors to improve education and employment opportunities for women.
- ✓ Continue to deliver programs that support young women to consider broader career options and expanded subject selection to improve their long term employability and financial security.
- ✓ Maintain provision of vocational education and training through TAFE NSW to young women who may experience disadvantage in relation to education such as young mothers and young sole parents.

Women in Sport

- ✓ Continue the successful *Women's Sport Leaders Scholarship* program.
- ✓ Support workshops for club administrators on ways to increase the involvement of women and girls as players, coaches and officials.
- ✓ Host the *International Women in Sport Conference* in Sydney in 2010.

THE STATE PLAN

Delivering a new direction:

Better services for women contributes to the NSW State Plan's priorities and targets.

Better services for women	State Plan Priority						
	R1 - Reduced rates of crime, particularly violent crime	S1 - Improved Access to quality healthcare	F3 - Improved outcomes in mental health	F1 - Improved health and education for Aboriginal people	P1 - Increased business investment	P7 - Better access to training in rural and regional and rural NSW to support local economies	
Ongoing Initiatives							
Respect and responsibility: creating safe communities	✓		✓				
Healthy women		✓	✓	✓			
Work and family balance							
Women in leadership							
Women in business					✓		
Aboriginal women		✓	✓	✓			
Rural women		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Older women		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls and young women	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Women in sport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

**For further information
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