



# Chief Executive Women

Women leaders enabling women leaders

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **ECONOMIC RECOVERY NEEDS MORE INVESTMENT IN WOMEN'S WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION**

Wednesday 7 October 2020: Chief Executive Women (CEW) commends the Federal Government for delivering substantial support to businesses during the COVID-19 crisis and in its Budget response yesterday. CEW President, Sue Morphet, said 'CEW welcomes the significant investment in a business led recovery to deliver productivity and job growth in the coming years.'

'CEW also welcome the Women's Economic Security Statement, which includes investment to support more women and girls into STEM careers, in women's leadership, and the establishment of the Respect@Work Council to address sexual harassment.'

'However, more needs to be done. Australian economic recovery needs more opportunities and job creation for women, who have been amongst the hardest hit by this crisis. This is why CEW has been calling for a gender lens to shape the Budget. We welcome vital investment in male dominated industries, such as manufacturing and infrastructure. But equally, we must prioritise investment in the infrastructure needed to increase women's workforce participation (particularly full time), prosperity and job creation.' said Ms Morphet.

'CEW welcomes the investment in jobs for youth; but is concerned that older women appear to have been forgotten in this Budget. It is particularly challenging for older people to reenter the workforce after losing their jobs. This Budget does little to provide opportunities for older women and harness their contribution to recovery.'

Ms Morphet said 'Increasing female full-time workforce participation is one of Australia's biggest economic opportunities; and making early childhood education and care more affordable is one of the most effective policy levers to do that. This was a missed opportunity in the Budget.'

'Today, too many women face powerful financial disincentives to increasing their hours or days of work. An unintended consequence of the current Child Care Subsidy is that while primary carers are supported in taking up part time work, they face financial barriers to working full time. Now more than ever, Australia needs everyone who is offered a job or shift to be able to take it. We cannot afford to leave talented, capable and experienced women on the sidelines.'

Ms Morphet said 'Investment in affordable childcare puts more discretionary spending power into household budgets, particularly lower income households. We know these families will spend in the sectors that need it most – retail, hospitality, entertainment and tourism.'

'CEW has been urging the Federal Government to modify the current Child Care Subsidy, which would deliver a \$5.4bn boost to GDP. CEW looks forward to continuing this vital work with the Government.'

**ENDS**

#### **For more information:**

Melanie Fernandez, Director, Policy, Advocacy & Research, Chief Executive Women  
+61 402 334 286 | [mfernandez@cew.org.au](mailto:mfernandez@cew.org.au)