



Chief Executive Women

Women leaders enabling women leaders

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Businesswoman Libby Lyons welcomed home to WA as State Chair of Chief Executive Women**

Chief Executive Women (CEW) has announced businesswoman Libby Lyons as Chair of the Western Australian Chapter of the organisation for the next two years, replacing Denise McComish who has completed her term in the role.

The appointment coincides with Ms Lyons returning home to Western Australia after a stint on the east coast as Director of the Australian Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

“Western Australia has always had some of the most outstanding female executive talent in Australia and I’ll be looking to make sure these women are showcased in our own state,” said Ms Lyons.

Libby Lyons has extensive executive and non-executive experience spanning a range of sectors including resources, energy, science, aged care, and disability care. Most recently she was Director of the Australian Workplace Gender Equality Agency, and currently chairs the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council and Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE).

Western Australia has the widest gender pay gap in Australia, seeing a salary difference of 22.9% between men and women. While this can be partly explained by the concentration of highly paid male-dominated industries like mining and construction in WA, Ms Lyons wants the state to do better.

“I want to foster our emerging leaders through Chief Executive Women’s leadership and scholarship programs. Around 130 West Australians have already taken part in these programs and I am on the lookout for more,” Ms Lyons said.

“The alumni of our scholarship program boasts some exceptional local leaders, particularly in the resources sector. These include Julie Shuttleworth who received a CEW scholarship in 2015 and is now Deputy CEO of Fortescue Metals and Nicole Duncan who took part in CEW’s Leaders Program in 2008 and is now the Chief Legal Officer and Company Secretary at South32.

“I will be working with business, government and the community to see more women in leadership roles, and at the decision making tables. The evidence is clear, more female leaders realises improved performance, productivity, and profitability<sup>1</sup>. Better for business, better for employees and better for WA,” she said.

**ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Equity Insights 2020: Delivering the Business Outcomes (Workplace Gender Equality Agency and Bankwest Curtin Economics)

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**Background – Chief Executive Women**

**[www.cew.org.au](http://www.cew.org.au)**

Chief Executive Women's (CEW) shared mission is 'women leaders enabling other women leaders'. CEW's 640 members hold leading roles in Australia's largest private and public organisations. They oversee more than 1.3 million employees and \$749 billion in revenue. Member's organisations have a combined market capitalisation greater than \$1.144 trillion and contribute in excess of \$249 billion to Australia's GDP.

Since 1985 CEW has influenced and engaged all levels of Australian business and government to achieve gender balance. Through advocacy, research, targeted programs and scholarships, CEW helps to remove the barriers to women's progression and ensure equal opportunity for prosperity. CEW's members work actively to realise our vision of a community where women and men have equal economic and social choices and responsibilities.

**Background – Libby Lyons**

Libby Lyons was Director of the Australian Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) from 2015 to 2021. Libby led the Agency collecting and monitoring workplace data on progress towards gender equality, supporting Australian employers with tools and education, advocating and influencing change and publicly holding employers accountable for results.

Libby developed a strategic plan focused on maximising the Agency's world-leading dataset and expanding the reach and impact of gender reporting and presented at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York in 2018.

Prior to joining the Agency Libby had a distinguished career in corporate affairs and government relations, including heading up BHP Billiton's Olympic Dam corporate affairs division, as well as senior roles at Atlas Iron, CITIC Pacific Mining, Alcoa Australia, the Western Power Corporation and Telstra. She has been a director on the boards of not-for-profit organisations SIDS and Kids WA, and was Executive Chairman for Kalparrin, a charity that supports the carers of children with disabilities.

Libby holds a Diploma of Teaching (Primary) from the University of Melbourne.

Libby takes part in regular roundtable and speaking events with business leaders and has a strong personal commitment to public service, having started her career as a primary school teacher. Libby featured in "200 Women who will change the way you see the world" as well as Apolitical's 100 Most Influential People Working in Gender Policy 2018 list.