

# ALCOA ACHIEVES 15 YEARS as Employer of Choice for women

Alcoa of Australia has again been recognised as having best practice gender equity policies by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) – achieving an incredible 15 consecutive years as one of the agency’s Employers of Choice for Gender Equality.

**WHEN KYLIE HAINES** arrives for work each day at Alcoa’s Pinjarra alumina refinery, 85km south of Perth, she takes pride in knowing her employer appreciates the quality of her work, and treats people for their performance and not their gender.

Currently working as a residue production maintenance coordinator with a team of 30 people, Haines has racked up 22 years of service for Alcoa and is still excited by the challenge.

“I love my job at Alcoa because I can get out in the field, connect with people, I’m constantly challenged and I know I can step up in my career,” Haines says.

“I felt a bit intimidated when I stepped into the new role but I just kept remembering the advice I received from the Alcoa Women’s Network mentoring program where they said, ‘Women often think they have to be 100 per cent qualified and confident to apply for a new role, but no one ever steps into a role with 100 per cent knowledge’.

“I also knew that at Alcoa if you are willing to put in the effort and learn then you will always be supported.”

Haines was in her twenties when she started at Alcoa and still remembers when men would say ‘Wow, there’s a female’.

“Now the guys don’t bat an eyelid when they see a woman – we have female tradies and operators when historically people would say a woman couldn’t do those jobs,” she continues.

Alcoa’s leading approach to gender equity has been long acknowledged by WGEA in naming it an ‘Employer of Choice’. The citation acknowledges

employers across all sectors which actively encourage, recognise and commit to achieving gender equality in their workplaces.

Despite its best practice policies, with a workforce comprising just 13 per cent women, Alcoa has created a call to action initiative - Catalyst for Change (C4C) – to improve the organisation’s overall retention of women.

The initiative is being led from the top, with Alcoa of Australia chairman and managing director Michael Parker, taking the pledge to be a ‘catalyst for change’.

“At Alcoa this means actively reviewing

your everyday work actions in the context of gender equity, and taking steps to do things differently to get the balance right,” Parker, also a proud member of the ‘CEOs for Gender Equity’, says.

“As a leader, one of my key actions was adding a diversity and inclusion agenda item to every lead team meeting, in much the same way as we have standing items for health and safety. It’s that important, and we all need to be accountable.”

Parker is proud of Alcoa’s 15 years of being a WGEA ‘Employer of Choice’, but says there is still much work to do to close the gender gap. **RP**



Kylie Haines on site at Pinjarra alumina refinery