

FORTESCUE SHINES diversity light

"In an industry where women comprise just 16.4 per cent of the total workforce, Fortescue Metals Group is leading the charge to make inroads to the diversity gap."

AMMA INDUSTRY AWARD WINNER 2017

CATEGORY: Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) Award
WINNER: Fortescue Metals Group

FIVE KEY THEMES are embedded into a diversity plan aimed at bridging the gap when it comes to women in the workforce at a global leader in mining.

Fortescue Metals Group (Fortescue) wants 25 per cent of its workforce to be women by 2020 and it has a plan to reach what seems an ambitious target.

The miner's plan focusses on strengths and opportunities to further boost diversity, and was developed following business-wide consultation sessions with over 250 employees.

Measurable diversity objectives were identified and developed around five key themes, zeroing in on practical ways to support women in the workforce.

The themes centre on continuing to increase the female participation rate, building talent pools, creating a workplace supportive of diversity, providing childcare options so families can balance work and family responsibilities, and, supporting and promoting opportunities for aspiring female leaders.

The company's commitment to change in the most male-dominated industry in Australia is outlined by its belief the sector has a responsibility to ensure as many women as possible have an opportunity to participate and make a strong contribution to Australian mining.

By providing women with sustainable career opportunities which has a positive ripple effect on the community, Fortescue's approach is far removed from the outdated way of thinking when it comes to the challenge of diversity.

It is this mentality to diversity commitment that landed Fortescue the

AWRA – Australian Women in Resource Alliance category at the 2017 AMMA Industry Awards.

Fortescue Chief Executive Officer, Nev Power says the company is very proud to be recognised for its commitment to building a diverse workplace by receiving the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) award.

"We are focused on providing practical solutions to ensure women can grow professionally and have the support and flexibility to have a career and family. We want to make a real difference by creating a welcoming, supportive and encouraging environment for women," Mr Power says.

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Fortescue doesn't simply implement 'tick the box' initiatives to meet a quota. Instead, they have meaningful and practical policies such as flexible working arrangements, child care support, career development and training opportunities that support women at work.

Tara Diamond,
 AMMA Director Industry Services

Fortescue female participation rates increased to 17.3 per cent in June 2017 and since November 2016, five women have been on the board.

"We are aiming to have 25 per cent of our workforce be women by 2020. We still



Linda O'Farrell receiving the AWRA Award from Steve Knott on behalf of Fortescue

have a task in front of us, but we're very pleased with how we are progressing." Linda O'Farrell, Group Manager Fortescue People for Fortescue Metals Group, says.

In a practical approach the company opened its on-site Fortescue Family Room, and is also offering opportunities to women to develop their relationship skills.

"Everything we do is based around making real change to enable women and parents to balance those responsibilities of work and family, rather than just ticking the box and feeling good about initiatives that sound great but actually don't deliver real practical change," Ms O'Farrell says. **RP**