

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2015

Statement by Minister for Women's Interests

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Women's Interests) [2.03 pm]: Last Sunday marked International Women's Day 2015. Over the last week I was pleased to attend many events and activities to celebrate the achievements and milestones of women in my capacity as Minister for Women's Interests.

The week commenced on Tuesday, 3 March with the delivery of the Liberal–National government's 2013 election commitment to improve strategies that address issues affecting women. The Premier and I co-chaired the first in a series of women's consultative forums. The theme for the forum was "Attracting talent—promoting non-traditional education and careers to girls". Key initiatives and opportunities were identified for government and industry to promote skilled trades and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering and maths to girls and young women. The professional and personal experiences of participants contributed to the forum's success, resulting in practical outcomes that will inform future government policy.

On Wednesday, I hosted the state government's launch of International Women's Day 2015 at the State Reception Centre with the theme "Standing Together for Change". This theme recognises the need for a collective approach. It highlights that barriers to career progression still remain for many women, particularly to positions of seniority, and it stresses the need for all sectors to support women's achievements and to enable women to attain leadership roles and encourage women's career progression.

Each day throughout this important week it was my privilege to attend a number of functions, events and celebrations, which included the UN Women's breakfast. UN Women is an organisation with a prominent voice that raises gender concerns at the United Nations and advances women's human rights and gender equality around the world. I met with a group of senior police staff, both sworn and unsworn, to discuss how we can encourage women to enter WA Police and the challenges confronting women who choose this career. I also met with several groups of schoolchildren to discuss their views and impressions of leadership and the roles they can play, as well as the opportunities that are available to young women in non-traditional careers; attended the 2015 Chamber of Minerals and Energy's Women in Resources awards breakfast, to celebrate the contribution of women in the mining industry; launched the WA Women's Hall of Fame recognition ceremony; and attended the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention "Women in Safety" event, to speak about the progress women have made in this important area of workforce participation.

Throughout the week I met with a large number of women and men who are collectively working to improve prospects and economic outcomes for women. I also met women and men who are inspiring in their passion and drive to seek gender diversity and opportunities across all sectors in our society. I look forward to continuing to work with these people to encourage and support women into non-traditional careers, to aid economic independence, address the gender pay gap and encourage leadership aspirations.