



**National Council of
Women of New Zealand**

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Wahine O Aotearoa

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**Submission to the Education and Science Select Committee on the Industry
Training and Apprenticeships Amendment Bill (151-1)**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the National Council of Women of New Zealand's (NCWNZ) views on the Industry Training and Apprenticeships Amendment Bill (the Bill). The NCWNZ is the umbrella organisation representing 30 organisations affiliated at national level and a further 40 organisations affiliated at branch level. It has 22 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of these organisations, as well as individual women. NCWNZ's function is to represent and promote the interests of New Zealand women through research, discussion and action. Our submissions are prepared by the relevant NCWNZ Standing Committee and the Parliamentary Watch Committee.

Introduction

1. Dating back to 1896, the policies of NCWNZ support the rights of women to enter trades and to receive equal pay for equal work. More recently, in its submission on the Apprenticeship Training Bill (2000), we expressed the view that apprenticeships should be an equally important funded activity within tertiary education alongside university and polytechnic courses. However, the concerns noted by our members in 2000 remain the same today: women's participation in trades is limited and there needs to be greater encouragement of women to take up apprenticeships, especially in non-traditional trades.
2. NCWNZ's current research focus is 'Women and work – no barriers'. The 2012 National Conference was addressed by experts working on the 'Women in Trades' initiative and the 'Ultimit' programme, which aims to recruit more young women into careers in the electricity supplies industry.

General Policy Statement

3. NCWNZ supports the Bill's general policy statement because of the potential benefits and increased opportunities it could create for women returning to the workforce, or who had limited opportunities earlier in life. It could also play a crucial role in staircasing young women from foundation education into training at higher levels.

4. In particular, we note that the public policy objectives include: *to establish a comprehensive apprenticeship system that provides the same level of support to all apprentices, regardless of age*. NCWNZ fully supports the need for provision of education in the workplace and believes that this is necessary in the context of continuous improvement, upskilling and the current environment of ongoing workplace change.
5. However, given women's current low participation rate, we believe the public policy objectives should also include specific reference to women as a group that will be provided with 'the same level of support' in the system. This is based on figures that show that across all industry trainees and apprenticeships women represent around 28 per cent of total trainee numbers – and around 10 per cent of apprenticeships. Within those relatively small numbers women are not well represented in the better paid trades. The industries with the most women apprenticeships include hairdressing, shearing, dairy and hospitality. In Canterbury, for example, in December 2011, there were 149 women and 1,046 male apprenticeships. (Tertiary Education Commission, ITO report 30 June – 12 August 2013; *New Zealand Census of Women's Participation*, Human Rights Commission, 2012).
6. Our call for a more comprehensive and active approach to women's occupational segregation aligns with the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee's Concluding Observations on New Zealand's last periodic review in July 2012. In this, the CEDAW Committee recommended that continued occupational segregation be addressed by focussing on education and the adoption of temporary special measures.
7. The following CEDAW Committee recommendations are particularly relevant in light of this bill and the participation statistics highlighted in paragraph 5:

Recommendation 30(d) - To introduce measures to desegregate gender thematic subjects with a view to ensuring that women and girls equally access non-traditional thematic subject areas, widening their opportunities for future employment and breaking the trend of occupational segregation.

Recommendation 32 (d) - Adopt policies and take all necessary measures, including temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 with time-bound targets, to eliminate occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical.

Clause 15 new section 11A to 11F and cross-heading inserted after section 11

8. NCWNZ supports the Bill's proposals around quality assurance, monitoring and consistency. However, we have some concerns regarding new section 11A which allows the Tertiary Education Commission to enter into funding agreements to fund persons other than Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) to perform certain industry training activities. We believe that this could result in training focused on skills that are specific to one business organisation, rather than on skills that can be used for the benefit of an industry as a whole. Such a result would be contrary to the Bill's purpose of encouraging and improving industry training.

Clause 15 new section 11B (2) reference to priority groups

9. In accordance with our established policy and views outlined in paragraphs five to seven of this submission, we believe that it is necessary, in a new section, to specifically cite 'women' as a group that industry training organisations must have regard to when carrying out the activity described in **subsection (1)(a)(ii)**.
10. In addition, a more proactive approach to addressing the issue of women's low participation in industry training and apprenticeships would include a new section that requires ITOs to develop strategies to encourage women's participation. Such initiatives should, in our view, be led by the Tertiary Education Commission and could inform Plan Guidance released at the start of each new Investment Plan cycle.

Conclusion

11. NCWNZ supports the general direction of the Bill. In particular, we support provisions focused on improving quality assurance and a more coherent and consistent approach across the sector. We strongly believe, however, that the Bill should include amendments that recognise the need to increase the number of women taking part in industry training and apprenticeships – and the range of trades they participate in.
12. NCWNZ believes that specific reference to women in the Bill would help address historic inequities, meet the CEDAW recommendations for special temporary measures and encourage industry to more fully utilise and develop the potential of a currently under-utilised and significant section of the workforce - women. The current rebuild in Canterbury provides an opportunity in that regard.

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Convener Employment Standing Committee