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MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 7 September 2022

NEW TRIAL TO ENCOURAGE MORE WOMEN TO ENTER CONSTRUCTION

An Australian-first Culture Standard will be piloted at NSW construction sites to improve facilities, working conditions and boost the number of women in construction.

New ways of working will be tested at the new Wentworth Point High School and Mulgoa Road upgrade stage 1 construction sites to address cultural issues that can lead to poor mental health, high rates of family breakdown and a lack of diversity in the industry.

NSW Treasurer Matt Kean said piloting the Culture Standard is an additional measure to the \$20.2 million funding allocation in this year's budget, to attract more women into the construction industry.

"With a record-breaking \$112.7 billion infrastructure pipeline, it's critical that we are doing everything we can to make our worksites work for everyone," Mr Kean said.

"The NSW Government is committed to trialing new ways of doing things to boost productivity and secure brighter futures for the 369,500 construction workers across NSW."

Minister for Infrastructure Rob Stokes said the pilot was focused on improving wellbeing and work-life balance, boosting construction efficiency and productivity all without impacting project timeframes.

"Construction sites will be happier, healthier and more productive places to work when there is better work-life balance and diversity, and more access to wellbeing and mental health support," Mr Stokes said.

"The industry has one of the worst gender pay gaps in the country at around 30 per cent so we're going to trial the publication of that data so we can work towards women being fairly paid for their equal contribution."

Minister for Metropolitan Roads Natalie Ward said this is the first of many initiatives aimed at boosting the number of women in construction to 15 per cent by 2030.

"The sad reality is that women on construction sites can be subject to sexist slurs,

offensive graffiti and second-rate amenities that don't accommodate their needs, including a lack of sanitary bins or private spaces," Mrs Ward said.

"The Culture Standard sets out a basic roadmap to making sites more inclusive because when sites work better for women, they work better for everyone.

"We also know another key barrier is construction work is typically a six day, 50 plus hour a week job, which is why this program will seek to improve flexible working conditions for women who are juggling family commitments."

The program is led by the Construction Industry Culture Taskforce - a collaboration between the NSW and Victorian governments, the Australian Constructors Association and industry leaders. The pilots will include measures such as:

- No offensive material on site
- Ensuring appropriate amenities are provided, including toilets for women, sanitary bins and safe changerooms
- Identifying and disclosing of gender pay gaps across roles, as well as implementing plans to reduce gender pay gaps
- Providing mental health first aiders on site
- Setting clear targets for the appointment of women
- A Monday to Friday working program, or when this is not viable ensure all workers are working a 5 in 7 program to give workers adequate rest and recovery time.

Outcomes of the pilot will bolster research and the contemporary evidence base of how to best generate cultural change on site and across the construction sector.

The NSW Government involvement in the program is being led by Infrastructure NSW and will support its ongoing collaboration with industry, construction firms, sub-contractors, and trade unions to make the construction sector a more inclusive workplace for everyone.

You can read the draft Culture Standard and the proposed elements [here](#).

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