



Parents in Construction Panel Event

For some, becoming a parent and continuing a career in construction can be daunting, so when one long-term female employee on the Rozelle Interchange raised concerns the Project formed a view that this concern was likely shared with other female workers. In response, the Project proceeded to investigate this important issue, seek feedback via a survey and coordinate a Parenting in Construction panel discussion to:

- better understand our people's concerns around parenting
- develop strategies to address these concerns
- provide a level of confidence that parents can remain in and thrive in the construction industry.



The BCW

Facilitator: Teagan Dowling

The Project invited Teagan Dowling, the Blue Collar Woman (BCW), to help plan and MC the event. Teagan is known throughout the construction and mining industries for her work with leaders to create more diverse and inclusive workplaces. Teagan brought a wealth of experience as a facilitator and as someone with on the ground industry experience.

Teagan noted that in her experience she hasn't worked with a company (let alone a project) having these sorts of open, frank, and honest conversations providing on the opportunity to reflect on how we move forward.





Themes, Findings, Recommendations

Access to information on Joint Ventures

Our Project intranet has quicklinks to both parent companies parental leave policies.

Recommendations:

- HR to send parental leave policy to employees manager copied when parental leave submitted.
- HR to educate Manager's through parental briefing session with employee prior to employee going on leave.
- HR to organise a session with employee and their manager in their first week upon return from parental leave. Any flexible work agreements to be mapped out and reviewed frequently.

Working flexibly

The Project does not have an approved flexible work policy however it is recognised that everyone's situation is unique and managers need to be comfortable within a broad framework.

Recommendations:

- SLT to review flexibility framework and communications plan for distribution
- Manager briefing and Q&A sessions

Single parent/co-parenting juggle

Managers acknowledge that a parenting journey is unique to each individual.

Recommendations:

- Managers to have regular open and honest conversations: regular check-ins with their employees, and review work patterns of employees with a flexibility lens, setting expectations for their roles.
- Leadership courses/modules from the parent companies need to build confidence in managers to have open conversations regarding parenting and other people challenges.

Next Steps

The issues faced by parents in the construction industry are many and varied. From logistics and demands of the job to perception and peer pressure, there is a lot that needs to change. The Parents in Construction forum was an important first step in the process of creating a more inclusive place for all. The insight and feedback gained will be fed back into the parent companies to inform tenders, other projects and new startups. If you would like more information on the session, the feedback or the initiatives already undertaken on the project please reach out to the project's Women in Construction committee.

