



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

CHIEF EXECUTIVE WOMEN RECEPTION

Thursday 17th October 2019

Ms Sue Morphet, President, Chief Executive Women

Ms Susan Metcalf, CEO, Chief Executive Women

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this evening.

I am pleased to welcome you to Government House, and I am particularly delighted for the opportunity to celebrate the work of Chief Executive Women.

Like many of you in this room, I know how important it is to celebrate the manifold achievements of women.

Like many of you in this room, I also feel the frustration – and the sadness – that the progress for women when it comes to leadership and, indeed, so many aspects of private and public life has been...well... glacial.

I feel that my whole career has been lived in a ‘transitional period’ which, when I started out a number of decades ago, I expected would have been fully completed by now, if not some time back.

Like all of you, I know why diversity genuinely matters. I know that every discussion, every decision, every problem's solution is better made or better found when there are different voices and perspectives mixed into the process.

What I also know, for certain, is that yours is not the group to whom to give a lesson in 'Feminism 101'. To whom to emphasise that we still count so many of women's accomplishments in the ones.

One female Governor-General. One female Prime Minister. One female Governor and one female Premier of our State. And if not in the ones, still in far too small numbers when it comes to politicians, company Chairs, Chief Executives, partners, entrepreneurs and leaders.

You do not need to come here to hear all that.

You are the ones who see enough to know of the frustrations. You do the research. (Thank you for your fantastic Senior Executive Census). You are the advocates.

But you are also the ones who live and breathe the successes that encourage us to believe that things can and will change.

And so, for me, it is uplifting to welcome this group this evening.

To welcome the women who, despite many odds stacked unfairly against them, have risen to the top of and into significant leadership roles in a diverse range of enterprises.

To welcome the enlightened supporters, sponsors and pro bono partners. People who share the vision. Who support the parity that will ensure not just fairness, but that our State can flourish with the input of 100% of its considerable talent.

To welcome all of you who support the Scholarship Program that has so far seen 190 scholars attend international business schools. What a precious opportunity you have provided to these young women.

And to thank the President, the CEO, the immediate Past President Kathryn Fagg AO and all Board Members.

Your mission of 'women leaders enabling women leaders' is perfect in its simplicity. I have no doubt that your collective skills, experience and ideas can move mountains, and the truth is that there are still mountains to move!

I wish you continuing enthusiasm, resilience and success.

And now it is a pleasure for me to welcome Sue Morphet to say a few words.