



Human Rights
Commission
Te Kāhui Tika Tangata

19 December 2013

Dr Cam Calder MP
Chairman, Education and Science Select Committee
Parliament Buildings
Private Bag
WELLINGTON

Dear Cam

RE: Submission on Industry Training and Apprenticeships Amendment Bill

Introduction

The Human Rights Commission (the Commission) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Industry Training and Apprenticeships Amendment Bill 2013. We do not wish to appear in front of the Education and Science Select Committee.

The Commission is an independent Crown Entity that derives its mandate from the Human Rights Act 1993 (HRA). The Commission's primary functions include advocating and promoting respect for, and an understanding of, human rights in New Zealand society and encouraging harmonious relationships between individuals and the diverse groups in New Zealand. The Commission also has responsibility for facilitating the resolution of disputes about unlawful discrimination.

The HRA also sets out the role of the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Commissioner and the Commission's mandate in relation to employment equity. These include leading discussions and providing advice on EEO matters; to evaluate the role of legislation in facilitating and promoting best practice in EEO; and to monitor and analyse progress in improving EEO in New Zealand.

Summary

The Commission wishes to support

- the proposal to remove the age restriction;
- the proposal to promote the participation of Māori in New Zealand Apprenticeships

The Commission urges

- the inclusion of women and girls as a group currently under-represented in Modern Apprenticeships and Industry Training
- Initiatives that support females into non traditional trades and apprenticeships
- That people with disabilities are included as a group needing support and encouragement into New Zealand apprenticeships.

Promoting the inclusion of under-represented groups

The Commission is concerned at the under representation of females in Modern Apprenticeships and Industry Training and notes that in the third quarter of 2013 women constituted 25.5% of Industry Trainees and Modern Apprentices¹. Asian and Pacific Island peoples are under-represented according to the latest census data while Māori are now well represented².

Demographic	% EEO groups in Population Census 2013	% IT and Modern Apprentices 3rd quarter 2013
European	74%	69.1%
Female	51%	25.5%
Māori	14.9%	16.4%
Pacific Island	7.4%	6.0%
Asian	11.8%	7.4%

We also note that under the \$28million Apprenticeship Reboot the first 10,000 new eligible apprentices/trainees who signed up for training from 6 March 2013 were able to apply for a subsidy of \$1000 towards the cost of tools and off-job course costs, or \$2000 for those in priority trades.

As of late October 2013, 8000 apprentices had been signed up³. The eligible trades are construction, infrastructure, engineering and electro-technology. The committee may wish to ask of the 8000 who have signed up how many females were able to take advantage of this scheme?

We note that men and women tend to choose fields of study and occupations that are dominated by their own gender. These choices contribute to gender-based occupational segregation, a significant cause of the gender pay gap.

We encourage initiatives that challenge stereotypes and support women into non-traditional work areas.

In July 2012 the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommended that the Government “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”.

¹ <http://www.tec.govt.nz/Tertiary-Sector/Performance-information/Industry-training/>

² <http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-about-national-highlights/cultural-diversity.aspx>

³ <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/reboot-signs-8000-new-apprentices>

The Commission has long advocated for increasing the number of women and girls in Modern Apprenticeships. In 2003 the Commission published a paper “Modern Apprenticeships Training” for the Boys and noted that females represented just 6.6% of total participants. This paper also reported that the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women had expressed concerns about the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and the apparent reinforcement of gender stereotyping.

The low numbers of women in apprenticeships have been tracked by the Commission since then and each time we have advocated for increased representation of women and girls in trades. The Commission would like to bring to the select committees attention the current figures, above. In both Modern Apprenticeships and Industry Training women are significantly under-represented.

Data on people with disabilities in trade training is not available, but the Commission estimates that it is likely to be low. The Commission recommends that in the first instance data is collected about the participation rate of people with disabilities and that intent to increase the participation rate is signalled in the legislation.

Conclusion

The Commission urges

- The inclusion of women and girls as a group currently under-represented in Modern Apprenticeships and Industry Training
- Initiatives that support females into non traditional trades and apprenticeships
- That people with disabilities are included as a group needing support and encouragement into New Zealand apprenticeships.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jackie Blue', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Jackie Blue

Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner | Kaihautu Oritenga Mahi