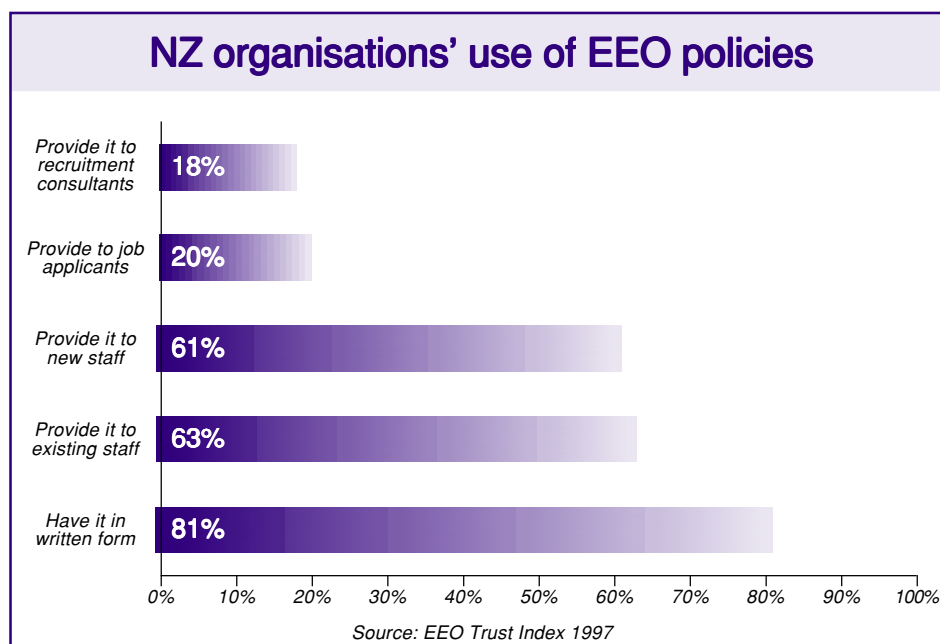


EEO Trust Index – good news and bad news

Do you know how your organisation measures up on the EEO front? What areas should your EEO plan target over the next twelve-month period? What edge could you develop over your competitors in the marketplace? Which issues will be the important ones to manage in the new millennium?

The EEO Trust Index has been created precisely to help you address these sorts of questions. The EEO Trust National Conference held in Wellington on 13 November last year marked the release of the inaugural EEO Trust Index. It provides an annual measurement of the progress made towards success through diversity in New Zealand workplaces.

By providing a benchmark of EEO activities, the EEO Trust Index acts as a reference point for New Zealand organisations and businesses in further developing and refining their own EEO policies and plans. The information will also allow the EEO Trust to develop appropriate projects and educational resources to help meet workplace needs. The first EEO Trust Index is a stocktake of both the context in which New Zealand organisations operate and the current level of EEO activity. This information will be used for comparison with future years. The EEO Trust Index has three sections. The first provides statistical information on external factors which can impact on New Zealand business success, such as changing demographic trends, labour supply, trends in employment contract provisions, and discrimination and sexual harassment information. The second section has the results from the first annual EEO survey conducted by the EEO Trust. Nearly 1800 organisations, most with over 50 employees, were surveyed with a 19.5% response rate. They were asked about their awareness of EEO and whether they had policies and practices in place, in particular in relation to childcare, work and family information, flexible work arrangements, anti-sexual harassment policies, and bias in recruitment. The final part of the EEO Trust Index offers an insight into emerging issues which could have an impact on New Zealand organisations in the future.



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Ngā Rongo Pānui a te Rōpū Tiaki
Whakaōrite Whiwhinga Mahi

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If you wish to be included on our mailing list, or would like information on EEO Trust services or resources, please contact

EEO Trust
PO Box 12929
Penrose
Auckland

ph 09 525 3023
fax 09 525 7076
admin@eeotrust.org.nz
<http://www.eeotrust.org.nz>

Level 9
Ellerslie Tower
6B Cawley Street
Ellerslie

EEO Trust Mission Statement:
'The purpose of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust is to promote to New Zealand employers the implementation of EEO principles and EEO best practice in the workplace as a means of improving their effectiveness, efficiency and competitiveness through the successful management of diversity'

continued from previous page

As expected, the survey confirmed a strong awareness among respondents of the benefits of EEO. But - and it's a big "but" - it also highlighted specific areas where there is still a lack of practical commitment backed up by documented procedures and a detailed plan. **"Some workplaces," says EEO Trust Executive Director, Trudie McNaughton, "are committed to high quality employment practices, but the majority are failing to seek competitive advantage by valuing diversity."** It is this failure to take account of the diversity that clearly exists in New Zealand society which puts businesses at risk. These risks include the possibility of expensive litigation, lost employment opportunities, losing staff to competitors, and losing the edge to

grab market share.

Trudie McNaughton notes the EEO Trust Index shows that members of the EEO Employers Group are more likely to have initiated EEO strategies, including those for women and Maori, than their competitors. She says, "We're hoping that other organisations will realise the benefits of belonging to the EEO Employers Group and discover how they, too, can gain business success through diversity." If you would like a full version of the EEO Trust Index, or would like to know more about the benefits of joining the EEO Employers Group, contact the EEO Trust.

To order the EEO Trust Index, fill in the enclosed leaflet.

EEO Action

**The EEO Trust web site is an excellent source of EEO information
Visit it on <http://www.eeotrust.org.nz>**

- Find out more about the services and resources of the EEO Trust.
- Order a resource from the EEO Trust Resources Catalogue.
- Use the EEO Referral Database to request information.
- Learn more about the Work & Family Network and the EEO Employers Group.
- Access the latest news releases.
- Keep up with EEO initiatives and issues.

If you are an EEO Trust or EEO Employers Group member and would like your site's EEO Policy linked to the EEO Trust site, contact Allysa Stewart, EEO Promotions Manager.

Prime Minister to present EEO Trust Work & Family Awards

We are pleased to announce that the Prime Minister, the Hon Jenny Shipley, will present the inaugural **EEO Trust Work & Family Awards** at a dinner to be held in **Auckland on 24 June 1998**. Entry for the Awards, for which there are four categories, is open to all members of the **Work & Family Network**. To benefit from the opportunity to have your organisation's family-friendly policies and practices recognised and rewarded, be sure to get your entry into the EEO Trust office by **2 April 1998**. If your organisation is not already a member of the Work & Family Network, **now is the time to join!**

For further information about the EEO Trust Work & Family Awards, the dinner or the Work & Family Network, please contact Robyn Ramage, Information Manager, at the EEO Trust office or email rramage@eeotrust.org.nz.

An EEO policy – forget the warm fuzzies, say hello to the bottom line

Who needs an EEO policy, and why? Why should businesses focus on quality employment practices, and spend hard-earned money to do so? The general aim of business, after all, is to make a profit for those who take the risks, with a positive financial trickle-down for employees and, further on, for society as a whole. Hard-working New Zealand companies, so the argument goes, aren't in the business of tokenism and charity. Leave that to some of the big US corporations which have reserves to spare and can afford to indulge in a little altruism.

While these perceptions represent something of a caricature, the recent survey conducted as part of the EEO Trust Index suggests a less than whole-hearted implementation of EEO by New Zealand organisations. **Certainly, 81% of all EEO Trust Index respondents had an EEO policy. However, for the private sector this proportion slipped to 73%. And of those with a policy, only 81% have it in a written form. Very few organisations use their policy for competitive advantage when recruiting staff by providing it to recruitment consultants or job applicants.**

EEO Policy Essentials

So what makes a good policy endorsing EEO? An EEO policy is a written statement defining EEO and its benefits, and stating the organisation's commitment to implement and promote EEO through a practical EEO plan. As a visible public declaration, it conveys to management, employees and clients the vision of what EEO means for the organisation. This is the beginning of spreading the ownership of EEO. **"The challenge," says Heather Kean of Pohlen Kean Ltd, "is to make EEO a reality within your organisation. EEO**

policies and procedures are where you start, not where you finish."

There are no hard and fast rules about how to develop an EEO policy or how to include EEO in a more general policy, but the following are generally seen as critical elements for success:

- Clearly visible support at the highest level of management (who better to issue the policy in the first place than the CEO?)
- A plain language definition of EEO and the benefits to be achieved
- A statement of the intention to implement EEO via a measurable EEO plan
- A statement of responsibilities of managers, supervisors and other staff
- A statement of commitment to an ongoing consultation process
- Publicising the policy widely internally and externally

Benefits

That's all very well, of course, but we need to understand why we should have an EEO policy in the first place. Heather Kean is quite clear on this. "A diverse, informed and aware workforce, and a safe and flexible workplace, will ensure not only that we meet our legal obligations, but also that we understand the market in which we operate and that we can attract and retain quality people," she says. Both issues, she points out, are fundamental to a successful and profitable business. In general, not committing to EEO exposes organisations to an unacceptable level of risk. The Human Rights Act 1993 forbids discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, political opinion, employment

status, family status, and sexual orientation. The Act prohibits discrimination on these grounds, not only in relation to employment, but also in relation to education and training, the provision of goods and services, and the provision of accommodation. Your best bet to ensure compliance with the Act is to have in place EEO policies and programmes. The consequences of not doing so can be costly, as the recent cases highlighted below indicate. The Employment Contracts Act 1991 is also relevant here since the definition of “personal grievance” includes unjustifiable dismissal, discrimination and sexual harassment.

Legal issues aside, there are a number of clear business benefits to developing a working EEO policy. They are all issues which impact on the bottom line of any business activity, and include:

- Broadening your choice of job candidates at all levels when searching for talent for your workplace. The right person for the job is worth their weight in gold. A mismatch can cost dearly in terms of lengthy training, low productivity, low morale, and possibly the costs of recruiting a replacement.
- Increased diversity in your workplace, making your organisation more flexible and more responsive to change. Increasingly, fast response time and an innovative approach are what can give you the edge over your competitors.
- Improved customer service since your own internal diversity will reflect the changing demographics of our society, offering a better match in meeting your clients’ and customers’ needs. Continuing demographic changes in the New Zealand population are clearly outlined in the 1997 EEO Trust Index and supported by the findings presented at the Population Conference held in Wellington in November 1997.

- Improved productivity and staff relations which result when employees know they are valued as individuals and treated fairly. The costs of dissatisfied employees is high in terms of under-performance, infectious low morale, accidents, absenteeism and turnover.
- Improved PR, which is an important consideration even for the smallest companies.

Costs of Ignoring EEO

The costs of ignoring EEO can be high as these cases show.

Case One

In March 1997, the Human Rights Commission found a national real estate firm guilty of unlawful discrimination in relation to a pregnant employee after a complaint was first laid in 1995. The saleswoman had been told by her manager that the physical aspects of her pregnancy were bad for the company image. When she suffered a miscarriage, the manager passed one of her best deals to a colleague in her absence without consulting her. The settlement consisted of a \$10,000 general damages payment, an assurance from the company that it would educate staff on the Human Rights Act and ensure compliance of it, and an apology from the manager.

Case Two

As reported in Tirohia in November 1997, a young man’s formal complaint that he had been verbally and physically sexually harassed by his middle-aged female boss resulted in a settlement of \$6,000 for pain and humiliation, and the requirement for sexual harassment prevention procedures to be put in place by the employer. The company had a sexual harassment prevention policy, but there were no procedures or training.

Case Three

A trust manager of eight years’ standing with the New Zealand Guardian Trust, sought altered hours on her return to

work after having a baby. In March 1997 it was reported that her employer had finally negotiated a mutually acceptable arrangement with her, but only after the woman took the case to the Employment Court which decided that she should be allowed to return on her proposed new times pending a full hearing.

Case Four

In September 1997, the Complaints Tribunal ordered the TAB and the operator of one of its Wellington outlets

to pay \$5,000 to a man after he was refused a job interview because of his age. Although the man appeared to meet the job description's requirements for a trainee manager, the TAB operator did not interview him after learning that he was 41.

So how does your EEO policy measure up in comparison to your peers and your competitors? This checklist should give you some pointers on what may still need to be done:

Have You...?	If Not, What About...?
Does senior management have a commitment to EEO?	Organise a briefing session for senior managers
Does someone have responsibility for developing an EEO policy?	Appoint someone senior with appropriate skills
Is your EEO policy written down?	Document the aims, benefits and parameters in a clear statement to be issued by the CEO
Are designated groups covered in your EEO policy?	Analyse the statistical profile of your organisation to identify employment patterns and designated groups
Is your EEO policy widely promoted?	Provide it to all existing staff members, new recruits, recruitment consultants; put it on your www page; if a member of the EEO Employers Group, use the logo for internal and external communications

Remember. If it's your bottom line that you want to influence, then don't let your EEO policy gather dust in a bottom drawer. If you've got it, flaunt it! Use it and reap the benefits of success.

Useful resources available from the EEO Trust include:

Sample EEO Policies. A selection of policies from a range of sources including corporate and small businesses, educational institutions, professional associations and local government bodies. \$5

EEO Trust Index. A benchmark of EEO in New Zealand organisations released in November 1997. \$20 (plus p/h)

A Guide for Employers on Human Rights Act and Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO). Recently updated and revised. Current thinking and interpretations of the legislation. \$13.50 (plus p/h)

Updating EEO

Kia ora

The publication of the first annual EEO Trust Index last November represents an important step in moving from awareness and acceptance of EEO, to achieving further progress through EEO action.

Unless we can measure what we do, how can we know what headway we are making and what challenges remain? The EEO Trust Index provides us all with a practical tool, benchmark against which we can gauge ongoing EEO achievement and which will clearly pinpoint issues of concern. I would like to thank Janice Burns of Top Drawer Consultants for her invaluable expertise in developing and researching the EEO Trust Index. A summary of the EEO Trust Index is available free from the EEO Trust, but you can also order from us a full copy for \$20. A number of our members have found it to be a very worthwhile document to have.

Thank you, too, to all those who attended the EEO Trust National Conference in November and helped to make it such a productive meeting. For those unable to be there, we have highlighted Hugh Fletcher's keynote speech in this issue of the EEO Trust News. My thanks also go to Hugh for his participation, and for his frank acknowledgments about Fletcher Challenge's EEO experience. It's clear that even the leaders have some way to go down the EEO path!

The Cabinet review of the EEO Trust and EEO Contestable Fund has been



Trudie McNaughton

completed. We will keep you up-to-date with developments as they become publicly available. Thank you to those who assisted with the review process.

We have recently started a promotional campaign to highlight recruitment consultants who have joined the EEO

Employers Group. Recruitment consultants are at the forefront of the recruitment and selection process and need to be fully versed in EEO. **Make sure you use a recruitment consultant that is a member of the EEO Employers Group.** If you would like a list of those recruitment consultants who are members, refer to the membership list inserted in this issue.

Finally, we'd like to welcome two new part-time staff members to the EEO Trust team. Tracey McKenzie is now working with us as our Client Services Administrator. She comes to us with extensive experience in database administration and support. Tracey will be servicing client requests for resources. Richard Mortensen has also joined us as our Clerical Administrator, giving us much needed office assistance. We're delighted to have them both as part of our team.

Heoi anō

Hei konei rā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trudie McNaughton".

Trudie McNaughton

Hugh Fletcher says we need to walk the talk

“Any unbiased commentator looking at the executive ranks of Fletcher Challenge, both here in New Zealand and overseas, must acknowledge that Caucasian males are disproportionately over-represented,” said Hugh Fletcher, the retiring Chief Executive Officer of Fletcher Challenge Ltd in his keynote speech at the EEO Trust National Conference held in Wellington on 13 November 1997. His perspective on equality of employment opportunity generally, and Fletcher Challenge’s experiences specifically, were well received.

Fletcher Challenge is a foundation member of the EEO Trust and a company which has led New Zealand in its commitment to EEO over a number of years. But even a frontrunner like Fletcher Challenge recognises that it still has some way to go. As a result, the Fletcher Challenge Group, like so many other New Zealand businesses, has been missing out on a large group of talented people. “In an era of brutal competition for such executive talent, no organisation can afford to cut itself off from a majority of the pool of potential,” Hugh Fletcher stated.



*Hugh Fletcher, former CEO
Fletcher Challenge Ltd., at the
EEO Trust National Conference*

He went on to say, “Diversity of perspective, diversity of thought processes in decision-making, and diversity in opinion as to the optimal way to work together, are but three of the enormous prizes which an organisation can realise if it succeeds in achieving equality amongst its executive ranks.” Diversity of perspective is critical for any consumer-based organisation, since diversity in the executive ranks will mirror the diversity of the customer base. He cited the growing influence of females in purchasing and financial decisions, indicating that a correspondingly greater female representation in sales and marketing departments would make sense.

However, it was diversity in opinion as the optimal way to work together that Hugh Fletcher saw as the most important issue. He suggested that because this is the root of most discomfort, it is this issue that has slowed progress in achieving equality of opportunity. We need to look at issues from perspectives other than our own. “As long as we remain unprepared to do this, we should not be surprised at the slowness of our progress”, he said.

Turning from a consideration of direct commercial reasons why we should be pursuing employment equity, he went on to state that there are also indirect reasons why we all have an important stake in social harmony. If businesses choose to ignore significant disadvantaged sections of the community, they will not be able to sustain acceptance by society as a whole. Respect for the individual and a genuine performance ethic are a part of this social perspective.

So equal opportunity should be pursued out of self-interest, out of respect for individual human rights, and for society’s well-being. Leaving the last word to Hugh Fletcher, “If we walk the talk, we will improve internally morale, recruitment and retention, whilst externally enhancing our public reputation.”

Talking about EEO

The New trend in work/life programmes - the family centred employer. Trudie McNaughton discusses the practicalities of being a family-friendly employer at the Rostering and Shiftwork Conference. Clifford House, Auckland **3-5 March**. Contact Business Information in Action, ph 09 486 8087, email biia@clear.net.nz

Recruitment - How to limit your risks of complaints

Trudie McNaughton will facilitate two seminars on recruitment. The first to be held at the **Employers and Manufacturers Association, 181 Khyber Pass Road, Training Centre L2 in Auckland 16 March**. Contact the EEO Trust for more information. The second will be held at the **Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce, 57 Gilmore Street Christchurch 17 April**. For more information please contact Rebecca McDonald ph 03 366 5096.

Beyond Despondency - The UBI Alternative to the Welfare Meltdown. This is the second national conference on the Universal Basic Income (UBI), and will focus on the implementation of a basic income for all New Zealand citizens, including coverage of welfare and employment issues. To be held in Wellington in late March. Contact the conference organisers, fax 06 350 6319.

Designer Motherhood - Is it a Con? Women's Health Action Trust is holding a seminar on Saturday afternoon, **16 May** for working mothers to discuss motherhood, work, expectations and support. Jubilee Hall (old Blind Institute) in Parnell. Contact Linda McKay, ph 09 520 5295

EEO Resources

Workbridge At Work

A new magazine by Workbridge which gives practical case studies of clients who have found employment and the steps they took with their employers to make their workplaces accessible. For more information contact Workbridge Marketing ph 03 352 0209.

Creating Inclusive Environments

Resource outlining why discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is bad business. Available from Full Spectrum Ltd, PO Box 5255, Auckland, ph 09 846 7133, fax 09 846 7136, e-mail fullspec@pcnet.co.nz .

Maori for the Office - Te Reo Maori mo te Tari

The 1997 second edition of this practical publication from the Maori Language Commission. It covers letter writing, using the telephone, advertising vacancies, and includes a number of topic-related vocabulary lists. \$14.95 (plus p/h) from the EEO Trust, PO Box 12929, Penrose, Auckland, ph 09 525 3023, fax 09 525 7076, email admin@eeotrust.org.nz .

Stability and Opportunity

Report published in September 1997 on a project carried out by the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions examining the stability of employment and equality of employment opportunity for Maori workers. Available from the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, PO Box 6645, Wellington, ph 04 385 1334, fax 04 385 6051.