

Wednesday July 31st, 2013

Employer super package will help close retirement savings gap for female staff

National networking and advocacy group, **Women in Super (WIS)** and **The Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees (AIST)** have welcomed the move by an Australian business – Rice Warner – to offer its female employees a package of benefits to improve their retirement outcome.

WIS chair and AIST president, Cate Wood, said the package – which includes generous paid parental leave with a superannuation component for the full leave period and an additional super payment of 2% salary to female staff of Rice Warner – was believed to be a first for an Australian business and would hopefully lead to other employers adopting similar measures.

“We applaud any business that recognises and seeks to address the many challenges that its female staff face in saving adequately for their retirement,” Ms Wood said. “The super system is not serving Australian women well so we need employer measures like this, as well as better government policies, to help compensate women for their financial disadvantage.”

Ms Wood said key reasons why the majority of women retired with significantly less superannuation than the average man were time spent out of paid work to raise children and care for family members and the persistent disparity in pay between Australian men and women.

“Aside from these factors, women are financially disadvantaged at retirement because they live longer,” Ms Wood said.

Ms Wood said WIS and AIST had called on the Government to provide a superannuation component to its paid parental scheme and to remove the \$450 monthly earnings threshold for super contributions, which results in some females who work part time missing out on superannuation altogether.

The two organisations are also strong supporters of the Low Income Super Contribution (LISC) scheme, which came into effect on 1 July this year, and is estimated to help boost the super savings of about 2 million women.

“We hope that all Parliamentarians maintain support for this important initiative which greatly benefits women and many part-time workers who face an uphill battle trying to save for their retirement,” said Ms Wood.

Further media enquiries: AIST president/WIS chair, Cate Wood: 0417 391 669

AIST is the peak industry body for the \$500 billion not-for-profit super sector which includes industry, corporate and public sector funds covering the super interests of nearly two-thirds of the Australian workforce.

Women in Super (WIS) is a national advocacy and networking group for women employed in the superannuation and financial services industries. WIS lobbies on behalf of its members and women generally to government, politicians, unions, employer organisations, regulators, and superannuation funds to improve women’s retirement prospects and access to superannuation.



Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees