



The New Zealand Federation of Business & Professional Women BPW NEW ZEALAND

Chronology of Pay & Employment Equity

EQUAL PAY DAY - 18th February 2010

The timeline of events from the Minimum Wages Act of April 1st,

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1946..... courtesy of Angela McLeod, BPW NZ President

- 1957: National Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity was formed with NZ Federation of Graduate Women and NZ Federation of Business and Professional Women
- 1960: Government Service Equal Pay Act passed, to eliminate separate male and female pay scales in the Public Service.
- 1967: National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (NACEW) established. Set up an inquiry into the implementation of equal pay in the private sector.
- 1969: Female rates in the Minimum Wage Act rose from 68% of the male rate to 71%.
- 1971: Commission of Inquiry into Equal Pay published *Equal Pay in New Zealand*.
- 1972: Equal Pay Act extended pay equity coverage to the private sector.
- 1977: Human Rights Act made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex (including pregnancy), marital status and family status.
- 1983: New Zealand ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention 100.
- 1986: A group of working and union women established the Coalition for Equal Value Equal Pay (CEVEP). Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Unit established in the State Services Commission. New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979. Article 11 addresses equal employment opportunity, training and promotion, and equal pay for work of equal value.
- 1988: The report Towards Employment Equity laid the foundations for employment equity legislation. State Sector Act 1988 and EEO/Good Employer provisions introduced. The State Sector Act recognised that there were some institutionalised equity issues that were creating a discriminatory workplace for women and other EEO groups. The Public Service and the public health and public education sectors were required to be good employers and to create EEO plans and practices to deal with discrimination.
- 1990: Employment Equity Act 1990 addressed both equal employment opportunity and pay equity. Ten pay equity claims were lodged with the Employment Equity Commission by unions representing large numbers of women members, prior to the repeal of the Act six months after it was introduced. Commission for Employment Equity published *Into the 90s*, a report on the State of the Nation EEO Project.
- 1991: The Employment Contracts Act was passed...and government said at the time that it would better enable women to achieve pay equity and they relegated the Equal Pay Act of 1972 to being part of the minimum code.
- 1992: EEO Trust established, to promote EEO programmes and practices in private sector workplaces. The Trust has members across the public and private sectors. It continues to promote equity and publishes a range of EEO resources.
- 1993: Midwifery pay equity established, following an inquiry that declared midwifery work as equivalent to medical maternity work. Human Rights Act 1993 extended the grounds for prohibited discrimination including age, family status, disability and sexual orientation
- 1995: EEO: 1984 to 1994 and Beyond published, reporting on a 1994 assessment of EEO progress since 1984, and canvassing future directions.
- 1997: EEO Policy to 2010—Future Directions of EEO in the New Zealand Public Service promulgated, in response to the 1995 report.
- 1998: Primary teachers and principals with the same job size, experience and qualifications received the same pay as secondary teachers and principals. Report of Gender Integration Audit of the New Zealand Defence Force (the Burton report) published.
- 2001: Report by the Ministerial Advisory Group on EEO released.
Human Rights Act Amendment established the role of EEO Commissioner, extended new grounds of discrimination to the public sector and provided a revised complaints resolution process.
- 2002: Ministry of Women's Affairs published Next Steps Towards Pay Equity.
- 2003: Tripartite Pay and Employment Equity Taskforce established.
- 2004: Taskforce report published, outlining a proposed five-year plan of action on pay and employment equity. Government responded to the Taskforce report, developing a five-year Pay and Employment Equity Plan of Action. Pay and Employment Equity Unit established in the Department of Labour to support implementation of the Government's Plan of Action on Pay and Employment Equity. Contestable fund established to support organisations to develop the capacity and capability to work with gender equity issues. Tripartite Steering Group established to lead and monitor development and implementation of the Plan of Action. EEO provisions extended to the wider public sector through the Crown Entities Act.
- 2005-2009: Pay and employment equity review process, the Equitable Job Evaluation System and the New Zealand Gender-inclusive Job Evaluation Standard developed and implemented.
Rollout of pay and employment equity review process into the Public Service and the public health and public education sectors.
- 2009: Discontinuation of pay investigations, the five-year Pay and Employment Equity Plan of Action and the Pay and Employment Equity Unit, Department of Labour. Commencement of a further research and policy work programme on gender pay and employment equity by the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

