

14 November 2008

Mr R Fitzgerald AM  
Commissioner  
Parental Leave Inquiry  
Productivity Commission  
CPR Box 1428  
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Dear Commissioner

### **Parental Leave Enquiry**

Alcoa of Australia welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Inquiry into Paid Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave.

Alcoa is proud to have been recognised by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workforce Agency (EOWA) as an Employer of Choice for Women every year since 2001.

Alcoa supports the proposal for a Government funded paid parental leave scheme as an important step towards equal economic opportunity and work life balance for women and men in Australia.

Alcoa recognizes that getting work-home life balance right is not only important for our business by helping us to attract and keep our employees committed to working with us, but also critical to sustainable national productivity growth and well-being in Australian communities.

Alcoa is committed to ensure that women employees can realize their potential in a career at Alcoa.

In the early 1990s, we embarked on an ambitious and multi-stranded program to make our workplace culture reflect the needs and aspirations of women employees.

We have implemented a wide range of flexible work arrangements – this has had the single biggest impact on retaining and attracting women to Alcoa. These include flexible work policies, such as part-time and job sharing arrangements, study options and work at home arrangements.

Alcoa already provides 13 weeks paid maternity leave and employees can take unpaid leave to allow them up to one year in total to care for their child(ren). This also applies to adoptive mothers. Employees who have been working for Alcoa for at least 12 months are eligible for maternity and adoption leave. Alcoa provides one week paid paternity leave and fathers can take unpaid leave of up to one year.

Alcoa will continue to review and improve our workplace arrangements to ensure that our workplace policies and culture harness the talent and potential of all our employees.

In addition to our Human Resource Policy and practices to make Alcoa an employer of choice for women, we have a range of initiatives to foster a positive work culture including:

- The Alcoa Women's Network (AWN) which supports the development and advancement of women in leadership roles in Alcoa. The AWN aims to develop female managers through networking, mentoring opportunities and leadership development.
- The Future Women of Industry program which encourages female secondary students to consider careers in manufacturing and heavy industry. The Future Women of Industry Scholarships form part of Alcoa's commitment to diversify its workforce.

In 1996, Alcoa launched a scholarship program to assist, mentor and educate talented and enthusiastic young women about opportunities within their industry before they decided upon a career.

The scholarships help young women to plan their careers by showcasing opportunities in industry. Each year we invite participation from local schools and their female students to engage in the Future Women of Industry program.

The scholarships fall into two categories - the first encourages young women in the engineering and technical professions - the second in the manual trades and apprenticeships.

- Our partnership with Kommercial to employ people with disabilities. The Kommercial Café, which is partially funded by the Federal Government, is the first of its kind, offering hospitality supported employment to people with disabilities inside an industrial site at our Geelong smelter.

Please find attached for your background information about our business and involvement in the communities in which we operate.

Should you have any queries about our Human Resources Policy and practices that affect women in our workplace, please contact Kim Horne on 0412 250 115 or [kim.horne@alcoa.com.au](mailto:kim.horne@alcoa.com.au).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Cransberg', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

**Alan Cransberg**  
Managing Director  
Alcoa of Australia

Alcoa World Alumina Australia is the global leader in alumina production and Australia's sixth largest resources sector exporter. Alcoa is an integrated business comprised of bauxite mining, alumina refining, aluminium smelting, rolling and canned sheet products, with operations in Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales.

## ALCOA'S VALUE PROPOSITION IN AUSTRALIA

### Summary

- Alcoa operates the world's largest integrated bauxite mining, alumina refining and aluminium smelting system in Australia.
- These operations include:
  - bauxite mines and alumina refineries in Western Australia
  - aluminium smelters in Victoria
  - aluminium rolling mills and recycling plants in Victoria and NSW
  - dedicated port facilities in WA and Victoria
  - the Anglesea power station in Victoria
- In 2007, Alcoa produced around 8.7 million tonnes of alumina, 548,000 tonnes of aluminium, 32 million tonnes of bauxite and 191,000 tonnes of aluminium rolled products.
- Alcoa produced around 47% of Australia's alumina and 30% of aluminium.
- Alumina produced by Alcoa in WA accounts for around 11% of world demand.
- Alcoa is one of Australia's leading exporters. Alcoa's operations contributed almost \$A 5 billion in exports in 2007.<sup>1</sup>
- Alcoa is Victoria's largest exporter with \$1.6 billion in exports in 2007. Alcoa accounts for around 8% of Victoria's goods exports or 5% of total exports.
- Alcoa is a leading WA exporter accounting for around 5% of WA's exports in 2007.

<sup>1</sup> Includes all export production from the Portland and Point Henry smelters, including partner metal

Note to editors: "Alcoa World Alumina" should not be contracted to "AWA." This acronym is the registered name of another company.  
Alcoa World Alumina Australia is a trading name of Alcoa of Australia Limited, ACN 004 879 298



- Alcoa makes a significant contribution to the Australian economy. Around 80 cents in every export dollar earned by Alcoa stays in Australia.
- Alcoa distributed almost \$3.5 billion in Australia in 2007, including on wages, local suppliers, royalties, taxes, rates and dividends.
- Alcoa is a major employer – over 6200 employees and 1000 full-time contractors, predominantly in regional Australia.
- Alcoa provides around \$6 million each year in sponsorships and partnerships to help build stronger communities.
- Alcoa provides an additional \$8 million a year for community-based apprentices and trainees.
- Alcoa's investment in Australia totals over \$12 billion.
- Alcoa Inc was named one of world's most sustainable corporations at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and one of Fortune 500's World's Most Admired Companies.

#### **Alcoa – a global company**

- Alcoa of Australia, which includes Alcoa's mining, refining and smelting operations, is owned 60% by Alcoa Inc and 40% by Alumina Limited.
- Alcoa Australia Rolled Products, which is owned 100% by Alcoa Inc, also operates aluminium rolling and recycling facilities in Australia.
- Alcoa Inc is the world's leading producer and manager of primary aluminium, fabricated aluminium and alumina facilities, and is active in all major aspects of the industry.
- Alcoa Inc has 97,000 employees worldwide and operates in 34 countries.
- Global markets served include aerospace, automotive, packaging, building and construction, commercial transportation and industrial markets.
- Revenues for Alcoa Inc totalled US \$30.4 billion in 2007.

## **Alcoa in Australia**

- Alcoa has been investing in Australia for over 40 years.
- Alcoa's operations include:
  - bauxite mines and alumina refineries in Western Australia
  - aluminium smelters in Victoria
  - aluminium rolling mills in Victoria and New South Wales
  - an aluminium recycling facility in New South Wales
  - a power station in Victoria
  - dedicated port facilities in Western Australia
- In 2007, Alcoa of Australia's had \$4.49 billion in revenue and \$1.18 billion in profit.
- Alcoa of Australia paid fully franked dividends of over \$1 billion in 2007 to its two shareholders Alcoa Inc and Alumina Limited.

## **Workplace diversity and equal opportunity**

- Alcoa is committed to equal opportunity and a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Alcoa's work and family policy and flexible work arrangements include: paid parental leave, job share, part-time work, flex time, work from home, and flexible start and finish times.
- Alcoa's Future Women of Industry program aims to encourage young women to consider careers in industry.
- Alcoa provides 50 Future Women of Industry scholarships each year for girls in Years 11 and 12.
- Many participants have gone on to apprenticeships with Alcoa or further study.
- The Alcoa Women's Network aims to develop female managers through networking, mentoring opportunities and leadership development.
- Alcoa supports older employees with programs like phased retirement, superannuation plans catering for part-time work, financial counselling and retirement seminars, and a 'Keep in Touch' scheme.
- Alcoa provides employment and training opportunities for young people and indigenous Australians.
- Alcoa's Landcare Traineeship Program provides on-the-job training for indigenous trainees and other young people.

## **Women in the workplace**

- Women represent around 11% of Alcoa's workforce. Around 15% of management roles and 13% of professional roles are occupied by women.
- Around a third of new Alcoa graduates are women.
- Around 20% of women employees – and an increasing number of male employees – work part-time, which reflects Alcoa's efforts to help balance work and family.
- Alcoa provides 13 weeks paid maternity leave and also 1 week paid paternity leave.
- Around 90% of women employees taking maternity leave return to work.
- Alcoa's efforts in promoting equal opportunity and a more diverse workplace have been recognised with a number of national awards.
- In 2008, Alcoa was again named an 'Employer of Choice for Women' by the Australian Government's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA).
- This is the seventh year in a row that Alcoa has been named an Employer of Choice for Women.
- Alcoa is also a past winner of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Work and Family Gold Award.