

**LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE ADDRESS
AUSTRALIAN COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE COURSE
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE CANBERRA
SPEECH BY HER EXCELLENCY
PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AM
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2016**

Good morning everyone.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land – to pay respect to those that have passed before us and to acknowledge today's Australian Capital Territory's Aboriginal community who are the custodians of this land.

I have been asked to talk today about leadership – specifically my experience leading a change in culture in the Law School and the importance of having a mentor.

When reflecting on this I considered: did I lead a change in culture, what was the culture of the Law School, what did I actually do to change anything? Did I implement policies, did I lobby the university, did I lead by example? And what can I, Governor of Tasmania, formerly an academic, tell you, military leaders, about leadership that will be of value to you? What does my leadership style look like? If I have a leadership style at all? And how could sharing my leadership skills and style be of value to you in a military setting?

So to begin to explore those questions I thought I could share my personal story as a way of inspiring you to want to achieve higher levels of leadership within your own military careers, whilst also providing you with practical advice to help you do so.

So what is my story? How did a young woman, who at 22, married a New Norfolk hop grower, crack the glass ceiling of academia and then become Tasmania 28th Governor? It started with a good education. As a white, middle-class, heterosexual 17 year-old I had many advantages. This was 1966, exactly 50 years ago. In addition, and somewhat unusually for the time, I had parents who not only expected me to complete Year 12, they encouraged me to go to University to gain a professional qualification that would enable me to be financially independent for life.

In 1966 only 27% of University students were female. At the time of my graduation in 1970, only 3 in every 100 working age Australians had a University education. By 2011 this had increased to 25%. Whilst women were definitely in the minority at Law School when I was a student, there was in my year a cluster, at least, of young women who encouraged and supported each other.

I think it's fair to say then that the culture of the Law School when I started was male-dominated but because of my background and my parents attitude, it felt completely natural to me to not only study law but to pursue a career in what was in those days a very male-dominated profession. However it was not lost on me how inequitable that was; and so my interest in gender equity began.

I studied law, graduated, gained articles of clerkship, and was admitted to practice. Then I married at 22, and spent nine months overseas on a working holiday, and came to live in New Norfolk in December 1971. I soon had a temporary job but pregnancy prevented me from accepting the offer of a permanent job in a law firm because neither maternity leave nor part-time employment in legal firms was available. I had been doing some casual tutoring at the University, so I continued to do that after my first baby was born in 1973.

In 1975 I enrolled in a research higher degree, had another baby and was working and studying with childcare for two days a week. I finished my thesis in July 1978, just before my thirtieth birthday.

On the strength of my LLM, I was given more teaching. However, I was still only a casual employee. In 1981, both my daughters were at school at Fairview Primary and I was offered a one-year contract. My first full time academic job! I was the most junior and only female member on the academic staff at the Law School. At this time, across the University sector, just 16% of full-time academics were female. Whilst I was the most junior staff member, I was certainly not the youngest. My male contemporaries were now seven or eight years ahead in terms of full-time employment with all the leave and superannuation entitlements that went with it.

Juggling work and family was always an issue. However, the flexibility of academic work made life easier. Working from home was always an option. I used every scrap of the day. I worked on the kitchen table with the children

crawling over me. I took work to the swimming pool whilst they swam. I sometimes got up early in the morning when everyone was still in bed, to squeeze in an extra hour of class preparation or marking. And I had a helpful, supportive spouse. I enjoyed my work and worked (and played) hard. I said “yes” perhaps too often, but this led to many great opportunities to work on projects that others had knocked back.

Gradually I progressed up the academic scale. In 1996 I was made a full Professor. So how is it that I managed to be promoted to the position of Professor by the age of 48? Most importantly, I had a full-time job with flexible working hours and the ability to work at home. The 3 o’clock school pick-up was manageable most days. Getting the job done was emphasised rather than hours in the office. Another key factor was having a supportive spouse and family help with caring responsibilities for my children when they were young. Both my parents and parents-in-law supported my career and were always ready to help in school holidays or if one of the girls were sick. As the children became more independent, I had the opportunity to work longer hours and working at home was always an option. Conditions were in my favour.

I mentioned earlier that I became interested in gender equity some time ago. So during my term as Governor, to begin with at least, I have decided to focus on the issues of gender violence, gender equality and education. In many respects these are related issues. As a criminologist, law reformer and university teacher they have always been areas of interest. And I think they align nicely with the fact that I am Tasmania’s first female Governor.

And it has become accepted for Governors to speak out on issues of social justice if they can do so whilst avoiding direct criticism of government policy. Doing this calls for careful judgement. However, I see it as an important aspect of the Governor’s leadership role in encouraging Tasmanians to be a caring society – caring for others and for the environment in which we live.

Returning to the questions I posed to myself when considering what I might say to you today, and what I have done as a leader, it occurred to me that what I have done is speak up – and speak with authority – not by being loud, aggressive or having a “presence” as such, but by speaking from a background of deep research, analysis, consideration, consolation, discussion with respected peers so that what I say, argue, assert, is something that people will listen to. I would like to think that even if people don’t agree with what I have

to say, they respect my opinion because it is carefully considered and respectfully articulated.

On the issue of gender equity, now near the end of my second year as Governor, I have had quite a bit to say and I hope that this is leading a change in culture in every aspect of our community, a change that has been coming for some time now. As leaders in the ADF I am sure you have considered this also.

In preparing for this address I looked, amongst other things, at the current Australian Defence Force cultural transformation initiative “Pathway to Change”,¹ and “Women in the ADF Report 2013-2014” which was a supplement to the Defence Annual Report 2013-14² which directly refers to the Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick’s “review into the treatment of women in the Australian Defence Force-phase 2 report”³, so to me it seems that the issue of gender equality is a major issue for the ADF. I will come back to these documents later.

More broadly, in terms of gender equity, in the area of education we have made huge advances in developed countries including in Australia: for more than a decade girls are more likely to attain Year 12 qualifications; and since 1987 they are more likely to be higher education students.

But:

labour participation is less – 58.5% compared with 71.2%; gender pay gap: full-time weekly earnings for females are 19.1% less in Australia (November 2015 figures); average superannuation balances are 46.6% less than for men.

Women are under-represented in higher paid jobs and in leadership positions: 20% of directors in the ASX 200 were women (May 2015 figures); around 29% of parliamentarians are women (27% in the House of Representatives after the last election and 37% in the Senate); 20% ministers (23% in the Second Turnbull Ministry). Twenty per cent of local councillors are women – many communities are represented by a line-up of largely older men. And In 2012 in Universities, only 24% of academic staff were professors despite the fact that 42% of academic staff were women.

¹ In the Folder

² In the Folder

³ <https://defencereview.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/adf-complete.pdf>

And the ADF has fared no better, with women consistently underrepresented in all ranks across the ADF.⁴ But this is changing.⁵ So what are the benefits of gender equity in the workplace?

The Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)⁶ tells us that the benefits of workplace gender equality are that:

Gender equality attracts top talent: a workplace that is equally appealing for women and men will provide employers with access to the entire talent pool. As women are increasingly more highly educated than men, a workplace that is not attractive to women risks losing the best talent to competitors.

Gender equality can reduce expenses: replacing a departing employee can cost 75% or more of their annual wage. As both women and men are more likely to remain with an organisation they view as fair, employee turnover for an organisation offering gender equality can be reduced, thereby decreasing the high expense of recruitment.

Companies and organisations with gender equality perform better: a considerable body of research suggests a link between gender equality and better organisational performance. While there is a range of reasons to explain this link, one factor is that diversity brings together varied perspectives, produces a more holistic analysis of the issues an organisation faces and spurs greater effort, leading to improved decision-making.

And the next two points made by WGEA I will skate over as they are less relevant to the ADF:

Gender equality improves national productivity and competitiveness: the World Economic Forum has found a strong correlation between a country's competitiveness and how it educates and uses its female talent. In the Australian context, the Grattan Institute has argued that removing disincentives for women to enter the workforce should be an economic reform priority. It has found that increasing female workforce participation by 6% has the potential to add \$25 billion each year to the Australian economy.

⁴ Women in the ADR report page 9.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <https://www.wgea.gov.au/learn/about-workplace-gender-equality> (accessed 3 August 2016)

Gender inequality wastes resources: while gender inequality exists, Australia is not only missing out on the important contributions women make to the economy, we are also wasting the years of investment in the higher education of young women. Around 58% of Australia's university graduates are women but only 67% of working aged women are currently in paid work, compared to 78% of men, indicating Australia is failing to capture the substantial economic contribution tertiary educated women offer.

So are these findings applicable or relevant to the ADF? Commissioner Broderick noted "the distinctive nature of a defence force – a place that demands personal sacrifice and often personal risk from its members well beyond that ever asked of most citizens – in which the reality of posting cycles, operations and deployment, together with a linear hierarchy and career structure, makes the ADF experience unique."⁷

But she also remarked : "I sense a readiness by the ADF leadership to engage with change – to meet the dedication of thousands of personnel with a resolve to make one of Australia's largest employers one that is, in all respects, an employer where men and women are treated equally and respectfully."⁸

I think one indicator of gender equality is access to parental leave for both men and women. I read with interest the section of the Women in the ADF report about women and men taking parental leave.⁹ It records that men took far more leave than women and the retention rates were high for both genders.

Outside the ADF, the reality is that women with school-aged children take primary responsibility for domestic tasks. Of Australian families with kids under 15, 60% have a father who works full-time and a mother who either works part-time or not at all. Only 3% of such families have a mother who works full-time and a dad who works part-time or is at home.¹⁰

I think it is important to focus on normalising flexible work arrangements. This is echoed in the Women in the ADF report.¹¹ I also think it's critical that we as a community break down the male breadwinner model. In doing this we need to change perceptions of what it is to be masculine so that it is culturally accepted for men to share the domestic load, okay for a woman to have a higher status/higher earning job than her partner. We need to change the stereotypes of what it is to be male and what it is to be female. Until we have

⁷ Page 3 <https://defencereview.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/adf-complete.pdf>

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Page 25 Women in the ADF Report

¹⁰ Annabel Crabb, *The Wife Drought*, 2014, 7.

¹¹ Page 45 Women in the ADF report

more flexible working arrangements for men and women, until part-time work is seen as real work and part of real career progression and not just a token job, until we have more equal sharing of caring responsibilities between men and women, we won't see equality in the workplace.

I have also been asked to speak about the benefits of a mentor in my career. I have spoken in the past about the benefit of having a mentor who actively encouraged me to apply for positions and other opportunities. My mentor was a male (senior academics were all male at the time). Mentors don't need to be the same gender, but simply need to have the interests of their mentee foremost in their minds when providing advice.

I was heartened to read about the mentoring initiatives in Defence for women and men¹² and I see real benefit to the ADF from supporting this.

As Governor I actively support and I think you could say mentor many people I meet to link in with other organisations or people to push ahead in their endeavours which often benefit those in real need in Tasmania.

I also supervise PhD Law students at University and in this role mentor them to pursue areas of interest to them and to seek out opportunities as I was encouraged to do so all those years ago.

As leaders in the ADF it is incumbent on all of you to not only mentor your people but to lead by example and live what you espouse- people can spot a fake a mile off and so if you want genuine respect in your leadership- you have to actually believe in those values that I have touched on today and that your own leaders are expecting you to embrace.

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today.

¹² Page 41 Women in Defence report