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**31 August 2021**

## Equal Pay Day

Over my decades-long career in the mining industry, I've worked in many different locations around the world. I've seen what makes a great team, what motivates them and how cultural norms play a role in shaping decisions in the workplace.

As I reflect on Equal Pay Day this year, I'm reminded of the fundamental principle of equal opportunity in the workplace. No matter where I work, my leadership approach is always to provide people with equal access to opportunity and to fairly reward performance.

Quite simply, this is the right thing to do by all employees, and it's also the best thing to do to lift overall business performance. I've always believed that diversity of thinking gets better results, and now we have research to prove that diverse teams outperform those that are more homogeneous.

At St Barbara, we conduct regular pay audits, and the Group has a nil gender pay gap for like-for-like roles. We've halved our overall gender pay gap in the last 12 months down to 7.7% ahead of our 2022 target. This is certainly good, but our ultimate goal is - and should be - equality.

Despite the many changes across the mining industry over the years, it is hard to believe that there is still inequality in pay between men and women. While there may have been many contributing factors, there really are no more excuses.

It's even harder to acknowledge the prevalence of sexual harassment in our industry. The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has found that 40% of women have experienced sexual harassment in the resources sector compared to 33% across all industries. At St Barbara, we have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. As a WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality, we are required to report any such events and I am proud of our unblemished record to date. I intend to keep it this way.

The Australian Resources and Energy Group (AMMA) submission to the Western Australian Inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry described workplace sexual harassment as 'abhorrent' and 'not to be tolerated' and this strong language, in my view, is very much needed. We have many good leaders at St Barbara and across in our industry who are prepared to, and do, address issues of harassment head on. These leaders have my full support, as do all employees who speak up and call out unacceptable behaviour.

We have come a long way in the mining industry since I first started as a mechanical engineer; for example, prior to 1986 Western Australian mine owners faced significant fines for allowing women to work underground. Even qualified engineers, geologists and others were excluded. It makes me wonder what more could have changed, and what greater improvements we could have made, had we had more women in our industry then. Yes, we have come a long way; but there is always more progress to be made. I'm heartened by the strides we are making today, and supportive of the continued effort and commitment to closing the gender pay gap and ensuring women are valued equally and fairly in all of our workplaces.

*Craig Jetson is the Managing Director and CEO of St Barbara. Craig is a WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador and St Barbara is an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).*

Sources:

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