

# Women in Surveying

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## SUMMARY

The surveying industry in Queensland is critical to the economic development of the State. However, currently there is a critical shortage of surveyors. A recent demand study shows that this issue will only worsen over the next decade putting significant infrastructure and land development projects at risk. In addition, surveying is a male dominated profession with female participation rates being very low at less than five percent in Queensland. An obvious solution to help address the shortage of surveyors is to encourage more women into the profession. However, despite several programs aimed at achieving this in the past, success has been limited.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines and Manufacturing, Regional and Rural Development (the department) is the lead agency within the Queensland Government for Cadastral Surveying. A research project was undertaken by the department to look at what could be done to address the situation, especially how the leadership and culture in the Surveying Industry in Queensland could be further developed to increase and support female participation in the profession.

In response to the research project findings, the department has established the Women in Surveying program, which aims to increase the number of women in the surveying profession. There are four key deliverables under this initiative:

- Raise awareness of the issues with the wider industry via presentations at industry conferences/seminars to start a discussion regarding the type of culture that is required to support female participation in surveying.
- Formalise the creation of a network for women in surveying to create an environment where

women can share experiences, support, encourage, and inspire one another.

- Develop a strategy for the appointment of suitable qualified female surveyors to the Surveyors Board of Queensland (SBQ) to ensure gender parity.

- Create a forum consisting of the key stakeholders within the industry to address strategic issues facing surveying in Queensland, including diversity.

To date, progress against each deliverable has been made with:

- Five presentations have been made to the industry across Queensland highlighting the importance and benefits of diversity and an inclusive culture.

- The Queensland Women in Surveying Forum has been established. The forum currently has 42 members, and is growing, with 5 meetings held since its inception.

- In May 2024, the SBQ reached gender parity in terms of board members.

- The Strategic Surveying Working Group has also been established, with a culture action plan currently under development.

This paper will discuss the result of the women in surveying research project and its findings as well as highlighting the progress against the 4 key deliverables. Although it is early days in terms of benefits realisation, the paper will also discuss progress to date in creating a culture that attracts and retains women in surveying.