



## GENDER AGENDA

# WOMEN OF RESOURCES

Increasing the number of women in the mining sector has always been a challenge – especially given the work is often on remote sites. Soon, however, women in mining will benefit from a new online mentoring project, in which industry leaders will provide support and career advice.

Organised by the Australian Women in Resources Alliance, which is backed by employer group the Australian Mines and Metals Association, the program is part of efforts to raise the number of women in the mining workforce from about 13.4 per cent today to 25 per cent by 2020.

Minna Knight, AMMA executive director for industry, says the program will get under way this month. "We have been overwhelmed by expressions of interest from women who want direct access to industry leaders, and that shows the desire of professionals, students and job seekers to take advantage of the abundant career opportunities in the sector," she says.

The online program will help women who may have struggled with face-to-face mentoring programs because they work in remote locations on non-traditional schedules. Knight says more

effort is needed to ensure women get some of the 90,000 jobs expected from new resources projects and related construction activities by 2015.

"Women have a very

important role to play in the development and operation of these projects. If the industry is to meet its true potential, we need to make a deliberate effort to mentor young women so they can go on to help deliver the additional \$240 billion worth of projects sitting in the national pipeline."

The online component will be reinforced by an education campaign next year encouraging employers to make workplaces more female-friendly, with more flexible work practices and greater career development opportunities for women.

Glenda Korporaal

