

## **National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women**

### **Terms of Reference 2025**

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#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. Established in 1967, the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (NACEW) is a long-standing Ministerial advisory body. It has a track record of addressing issues of concern for women in employment. Its work has included addressing immediate employment needs, identifying emerging employment issues, and commissioning research about concerns that may not currently be addressed by employers or government agencies. NACEW includes one member from each of two organisations, the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) and BusinessNZ.
- 1.2. NACEW also links to partner organisations (the National Council of Women of New Zealand, the Māori Women's Welfare League, P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A., YWCA, and Rural Women New Zealand). NACEW will engage with the partner organisations as needed to maintain a relationship, share information and seek advice. From time to time, NACEW will develop informal partnerships with other organisations, as the work programme requires.
- 1.3. NACEW is responsible directly to the Minister for Women (the Minister). NACEW is independent of Manatū Wāhine Ministry for Women (the Ministry), which provides a support (secretariat) role to NACEW.
- 1.4. This Terms of Reference supersedes previous Terms of Reference.

#### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. NACEW's purpose is to provide the Minister with high quality advice on employment issues for women and inform government policy development in areas that align with Ministerial priorities. Through its work it enables women's participation in employment, leading to greater economic independence and better outcomes for women.
- 2.2. NACEW provides advice that assists the Minister and government in planning and delivering tangible results for New Zealand women by improving their employment outcomes.
- 2.3. NACEW identifies emerging issues, providing a diverse range of views including knowledge about trends in employment.
- 2.4. NACEW draws on mātauranga and te ao Māori values in the development of advice on improving employment outcomes for all women in Aotearoa New Zealand and incorporates Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles.

### **3. Functions**

3.1. NACEW is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a. Expressing views and making recommendations to the Minister on matters relating to the employment of women.
- b. Considering the views of Council partners and networks as appropriate.
- c. Identifying systems and strategies to improve outcomes for women's employment.
- d. Supporting strategies for specific groups of women and strategies to improve outcomes for women, including those who are disadvantaged in the labour market, for example wāhine Māori, Pacific women, ethnic women, younger or older women, disabled women, sole parents, women within the business community, and the LGBTIA+ community.
- f. Using their own networks to identify partnerships and collaborate with key stakeholders and provide feedback to the Minister on initiatives for women in employment from these groups.
- g. Ensuring that matters of significance are brought to the Minister's attention.

### **4. Protocols**

- 4.1. The Minister will set out expectations annually, outlining the Terms of Reference, protocols and any other relevant expectations of NACEW. The Minister may amend her expectations by writing to the NACEW Chair.
- 4.2. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at least once every three years.
- 4.3. Expectations of committee members:
  - a. Bring matters relating to women's employment to the attention of the Minister, either at meetings or by alerting the Chair and/or secretariat.
  - b. Bring perspectives on women's employment based on experience and interests, and ensure the experiences of all women are considered.
  - c. Provide free and frank advice on women's employment while maintaining discretion beyond NACEW membership.
  - d. Not disclose any information provided to NACEW in confidence.
  - e. Declare any conflicts of interest.
  - f. Adhere to the convention of 'no surprises' policy at all times.

- 4.4. Government and Ministers retain the right to reject any advice provided by NACEW. In addition, NACEW will not publish the advice it gives to the Government unless the Minister agrees. Public comment on Council matters will be made by the Chair and after advising the Minister.

## **5. Membership**

- 5.1. Composition of membership:
  - a. Membership will include people with expertise and understanding of current and emerging issues on the employment of women.
  - b. Members will be selected for a combination of their individual skills, expertise, and networks.
  - c. The membership will aim to provide a diverse range of perspectives on the employment of women, and to reflect the diversity of New Zealand society.
- 5.2. Specific member skill sets:
  - a. Wide knowledge and experience of matters relating to the employment of women.
  - b. Strategic thinking.
  - c. A track record of results and a focus on outcomes.
  - d. Well-developed skills and experience in board or committee work.
  - e. Connections and networks related to the employment of women, including a global perspective.
  - f. Demonstrated judgement and the ability to work with and influence a wide range of people.
  - g. Ability to bring a specific perspective as required (for example, Māori, Pacific, ethnic, rural, older, younger, disability, sole parent).

## **6. Appointment**

- 6.1. General appointment process:
  - a. All members of NACEW and the Chair are appointed by the Minister for a term of up to three years through a process agreed with the Minister, and aligned with relevant Cabinet and Public Service Commission directives and advice.
  - b. The NZCTU and Business NZ will be allocated one member each on NACEW. Each organisation will put forward up to three candidates for nomination, with the Minister making the final appointments.
- 6.2. Conditions of appointment:

- a. There will be a maximum of eight members at any time (and a minimum of five).
- b. Members and the Chair may be reappointed from time to time. There is no limit to the length of service. Any reappointments are made at the Minister's discretion.
- c. Any member of NACEW may resign at any time by advising the Minister in writing and informing the Ministry.
- d. The Minister may, by written notice, terminate the appointment of a member or the Chair.
- e. Council members will receive fees and allowances in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework.
- f. From time to time, the Minister may alter or reconstitute NACEW to ensure it meets the needs of the Minister.
- g. From time to time, NACEW may select a Future Director. The Future Director role is:
  - i. Appointed by the Chair, in agreement with the Ministry.
  - ii. Appointed for a period of 12 months, but may be terminated early or extended.
  - iii. An observer, not a member, and expected to attend all meetings and participate in discussions.
  - iv. Paid at the same rate as members.
  - v. Required to comply with this Terms of Reference, including confidentiality and declaration of conflicts of interests.

## **7. Accountability and reporting**

### **7.1. NACEW is required to:**

- a. Provide meeting minutes to the Minister after each meeting.
- b. Meet at least four times a year. Minutes of meetings will be maintained and will remain private and confidential, subject to the Official Information Act 1982. The Minister will attend these meetings.
- c. All members should endeavour to attend every meeting unless extenuating circumstances prove otherwise, in which case they should inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.
- d. Members should read meeting papers and prepare for meetings.

- e. A simple majority of members is needed to be present in order to have a quorum. Should the Chair be absent, they will nominate an Acting Chair for that meeting.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

- 8.1. The Chair will act as a member of NACEW as well as fulfilling the position of the Chair for the appointment period or as agreed with the Minister.
- 8.2. The Chair will be responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring that NACEW develops and implements processes and systems to maintain its effectiveness.
  - b. Establishing an agenda for meetings with the Secretariat.
  - c. Overseeing meetings.
- 8.3. The Chair will be supported in this role by the Ministry.
- 8.4. The Minister may appoint a Deputy Chair to assist the Chair in his or her absence, and as required from time to time.
- 8.5. The Deputy Chair is also expected to:
  - a. Take over the role of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable.
  - b. Determine the appropriate action if the Chair has a potential conflict of interest.
  - c. Attend meetings the Chair has with the Minister (as required).
  - d. Provide support to the Chair to facilitate the running of NACEW and so the objectives of the Chair can be met.

## **9. Conflict of interest**

- 9.1. Members must:
  - a. Perform their functions in good faith, honestly and impartially and avoid situations that might compromise their integrity or otherwise lead to conflicts of interest.
  - b. Sign a declaration of conflicts of interest upon commencement of their term, and update this declaration annually, or as requested by the Secretariat AND if any new conflicts arise. Every conflict of interest must be recorded in the Conflict and Declaration of Interest Register.
  - c. Members are to advise the Chair and/or Secretariat of a matter that could be seen as a potential conflict of interest. The Chair will inform the Secretariat.

## **10. Administration**

- 10.1. Secretariat support will be provided from the Ministry for Women. The Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment can be called upon as required.
- 10.2. The Ministry for Women will undertake all administrative responsibility, such as preparation of meeting agendas, taking of minutes, planning of meetings, as well as preparing papers as directed by NACEW and following up on actions as required.
- 10.3. By agreement, the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment will contribute to the preparation of papers for the meeting and will provide access to appropriate data where available.
- 10.4. The Ministry shall undertake a satisfaction survey of NACEW members every twelve months.
- 10.5. Any questions about NACEW will be referred to the Secretariat, [info@women.govt.nz](mailto:info@women.govt.nz).