

# Director's message



Once again it is my pleasure to present to Parliament and the broader community my Annual report 2015 as Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment (DEOPE). This report is my last as Director.

This year has been one of 'getting back to basics' by concentrating on the statutory requirements of the role of DEOPE under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (EO Act).

During the reporting period, 188 of the 264 public authorities that were required to have an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan had plans expire. Given the emphasis under the legislation of the need for all public authorities to have an EEO management plan developed and implemented without

delay, our work has focussed on the critical need to provide support and advice to public authorities to develop their new plans. This work involved regular engagement, including face-to-face consultations with chief executive officers (CEOs) and key practitioners, to ensure plans were in place by the end of 30 June 2015. We also used the improved diversity evaluation tools (as reported in the Annual report 2014) to ensure authorities were provided with timely, valuable and effective feedback on plans.

I commend those public authorities for their work in taking the time and effort to develop and submit new EEO management plans. I am pleased that a much smaller number of plans will expire during the next reporting period. In 2015/16, the majority of authorities will be focusing on the implementation of new strategies and activities designed to improve the representation of diversity groups in employment.

A key part of 'getting back to basics' has been a review of the DEOPE advice and assistance tools available on the Public Sector Commission (the Commission) website. Considerable improvements were made to the content and placement of equal opportunity and diversity information and tools on the website. Two key achievements have been the development of client specific information for the local government sector, and a new 'Women in leadership' section to encourage public authorities to develop and implement strategies that remove barriers for the progression of women into senior roles.