

## **International Women's Day 2018**

### **We've come a long way but much remains to be done**

It is easy to forget the pace of change in the workplace that has improved the lives of women.

Just over 50 years ago, women were still hiding their engagements, weddings and rings if they worked for the Commonwealth Public Service – otherwise they would lose their job.

Did you know?

In 1966 the marriage bar was lifted in the Commonwealth Public Service, which meant women could keep their jobs after marriage.

In 1972 the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission made a landmark decision by granting equal pay to men and women for work of equal value.

In 1973 the Commonwealth Government introduced paid maternity leave for its employees. This was soon adopted by all states and territories.

In 1977 NSW introduced Anti-Discrimination legislation.

In 1984 the Federal Sex Discrimination Act was introduced.

In 1997 Carer's leave and Family and Community Services leave became available for NSW public servants.

These are all initiatives of the labour movement

Now

We have a national paid parental leave scheme and in NSW five days of paid domestic violence leave has been added to the conditions of employment for public servants.

Unions have been at the forefront of these changes.

But we can't rest on the achievements of the past. Conservative governments and big business are looking to undermine the entitlements of working men and women wherever they can.

In 2018 our big challenges include:

- the gender pay gap;
- availability and extension of flexible working options;
- genuine acceptance that fathers can and will take parental leave;
- recognition and understanding of caring responsibilities which is reflected in hours of work that accommodate caring roles; and
- managerial maturity to actually manage the needs of staff and not just say no you must be at work 9-5 regardless of your circumstances.