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THE SUPERANNUATION INDUSTRY TAKES A COLLECTIVE STAND ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women in Super, a not-for-profit organisation advocating for better retirement outcomes for women, today announces a collective stand taken by the superannuation industry against family and domestic violence to mark the annual 16 day campaign for action against gender-based violence.

Women in Super Executive Officer, Sandra Buckley said the superannuation industry was responding quickly to the release of the Women in Super Charter Addressing Domestic Violence. 17 super funds and 7 industry organisations have already signed the Charter with others currently progressing the matter within their organisations. By signing the Charter they are committing to creating supportive workplaces for their employees and assisting any employee facing domestic violence in their efforts to continue to work and earn a living.

Sandra Buckley, Executive Officer, Women in Super said “By our commitment and actions we can send a strong message that, as an industry and concerned individuals, we do not accept family violence and will endeavour to enable any women amongst us touched by this issue to continue to maintain their employment and financial security, and offer them support.”

There are particular challenges faced by employees who are victims of family violence that existing policies may not recognise – the need to make multiple court appearances often at short notice, being prevented from leaving the house to go to work, being threatened while at work and having no access to finances.

Media Release

Available research shows one in six Australian women and one in nineteen Australian men have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or former partner since the age of 15¹.

It is estimated that the cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy is \$13.6 billion².

The Charter was formally launched by Women in Super at their annual National Roadshow, which featured Rosie Batty. Cate Wood, WIS National Chair said “The superannuation industry has a long history and tradition of supporting women and families in the workplace and it is important that as a group of employers, we take a stand against family violence by committing to a number of measures, including creating a family violence policy and supporting employees and members who have been impacted by family violence”.

“We are heartened by the commitment shown by our industry, CEOs and their teams to understand and respond to the challenges of domestic violence, and that so many funds and service providers have already adopted the Charter”, said Cate Wood.

The Charter has been signed to date by the following funds and service providers:

ACSI, AIST, AustralianSuper, CareSuper, Catholic Super, Cbus, Energy Super, Equisuper, ESSSuper, HESTA, HOSTPLUS, IFS, Industry Super

¹ ABS Personal Safety Survey 2012

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4906.0Chapter1002012>

² Domestic violence in Australia: a quick guide to the issues, 26 March 2015, Anna Dunkley and Janet Philips, Social Policy Section, Parliament of Australia

http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1415/Quick_Guides/DVinAust

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Australia, Industry Super Holdings, ISPT, MTAA Super, PwC, QSuper, REST Industry Super, Statewide Super, Sunsuper, UniSuper, VicSuper, Vision Super.

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Women in Super is a national advocacy and networking group for women employed in the superannuation and financial services industries, and advocates on behalf of its members and women generally to improve women's retirement prospects and access to superannuation.