

MP slams male board for '1950s attitudes'

Sue Bailey

The lack of gender equity on the all-male TasBuild board reflects 1950s attitudes and fails to comply with government policy on female representation, a Tasmanian MP says.

Independent member for Nelson in the Legislative Council, Meg Webb, said construction workers had recently raised concerns with her, prompting a series of questions in parliament.

TasBuild was set up by the government in 1997 to manage the Portable Long Service Fund for Tasmanian construction workers.

It currently has seven direct-



Independent
MLC Meg
Webb

ors who are all men. Ms Webb has asked questions of the government regarding the failure of TasBuild to comply with the state's policy of 50 per cent female representation on boards.

A government spokesman said the government was "leading by example".

"All government boards are required to achieve and maintain a 50 per cent represen-

tation of women on boards and committees," he said.

"Given TasBuild is a private trustee company, their board composition is a matter for them to consider."

Ms Webb said she recognised TasBuild was a private trustee company "but that does not let the Rockliff government off the hook".

She said an all-male board was "woefully out of step" with community expectations and questioned if the government had told TasBuild of its policy requiring 50 per cent representation of women on government boards, particularly during the recent recruitment process to fill the chair's pos-

ition, currently filled by a male acting chair.

"On one hand, the government is apparently encouraging the construction industry to employ more women and make that sector a more safe and inclusive work environment, but on the other hand control of construction workers' Portable Long Service Fund remains in the hands of a male-only seven-member board.

"This sends a disturbingly contradictory message regarding the equitable treatment of women in the workforce.

"This set-up reflects 1950s outdated attitudes and practices that saw men control

women's finances more than it does the community's expectations in 2026.

"I know it is upsetting and angering many of those workers who want to know why they cannot have a say on how their long service leave money is managed.

"Has the government ever encouraged the three industry bodies, and the three unions who each nominate a director to the TasBuild board, to include their respective female members in the nomination process?"

Ms Webb said the government must detail how it will address the gender imbalance on the TasBuild board.