

WA needs to 'show up' or pay trade price

CHEYANNE ENCISO

Two of WA's most senior trade officials say the State has little-to-no profile in some of its top export markets and called for local government and companies to "show up".

John Langoulant, WA's agent general for the UK and Europe, said while the success of the Qantas direct Perth to London flights helped bolster the profile of the city, more efforts were needed.

"Never think that WA is well-known, because it's not, it is not well-known throughout our region," he told a Committee for Perth panel on Wednesday.

"Australia is well-known and people recognise Australia by the Sydney Opera House, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the Great Barrier Reef."

Nicole Fasana, investment and trade commissioner for the North East Asia region, echoed Mr Langoulant's comments, saying there was low awareness about WA in Japan and Korea, despite being the State's second and third largest trading partners.

"Ministerial missions are really important because... when (Premier Roger Cook) came up to Japan recently, we had 60 media articles in local papers," she said.

"We need content, we need stuff to push out... so what sort of highlights have we got from Perth, good news stories, things we can sell."

Other local experts heading up the WA Government's international investment and trade offices shared similar views.

Nashid Chowdhury, responsible for the India-Gulf region, said the office's 27 year-long presence in Mumbai had played a big role in increasing WA's profile in the region.

"Next week we're bringing the ProWein show in Mumbai... people don't know we're celebrating 194 years of wine-making in the Swan Valley, people want to know these stories," she said.

Natasha Monks, who oversees the Americas region, said "getting out there and knocking on the doors" was critical in creating opportunities for WA.

Bryce Green, acting investment and trade commissioner for the ASEAN region, also said WA must "turn up again and again" in these markets to cement its profile.

Sexual harassment under radar at work

One in three report being affected amid revelations corporate responses fail people and organisations



ADRIAN LOWE

One-third of Australian workers have been sexually harassed at work in the past three years, but fewer than 20 per cent made a formal complaint amid fears their managers or workplace would not take them seriously or investigations would be overly harsh.

Reporting and response systems are failing organisations and people, according to a new report by the Champions of Change Coalition, a group of chief executives, company directors and government department leaders founded by former sex discrimination commissioner Elizabeth Broderick — with harassment often continuing when there was no change or a lack of support.

Companies and organisations should shift from adversarial, overly-legalistic and harsh investigation processes to those that are safe and fair and prioritise wellbeing and recovery of all involved — as well as appropriate disciplinary action when needed, the report to be released on Thursday outlines.

Many people who experienced workplace sexual harassment also chose not to report it formally because they were unsure how "serious" an incident needed to be, worried confidential reports would not remain so, or that the cost to their reputation and career from reporting it would outweigh any benefits.

"Reporting an experience of sexual harassment ought not to be worse than the inci-

dent itself. But that is the reality for many people," Ms Broderick, pictured, said. "Taking a person-centred approach puts the individual impacted at the centre of decision-making and planning, and gives that person choice about how the organisation should respond."

The report was prompted by a raft of changes that put a positive duty on organisations and businesses to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment in relation to work. It urges companies to address harassment as a human harm issue rather than one of legal risk.

"The real legal, reputational and financial risk now lies in under-reporting of the issues and ineffective workplace responses to cases when they arise," coalition convenor James Fazzino said.

The report — compiled from 19 recent cultural reviews of workplace sexual harassment over the past three years and experiences of members of the coalition — also reveals 26 per cent of men were sexually harassed at work in the past five years, as were 41 per cent of women and 67 per cent of people who identify as non-binary.

Organisations reported managers were often unaware of the options available to resolve matters, and there was a tendency to default to formal investigations to manage organisational risks. These often applied unnecessarily high evidence standards and burdens of proof.

People who experienced harassment often left organisations, even if the issue was "resolved", due to a lack of inadequate ongoing support and the stigma of speaking out. Many organisations failed to treat the post-resolution time as a safety or wellbeing issue to actively manage, the report found.

Ore at eight-month high

Iron ore futures in Singapore touched \$US130 a tonne for the first time since March on an improving demand outlook for steel in China, which is considering fresh stimulus to shore up the struggling property sector.

The steelmaking ingredient has jumped by a third from this year's low in late May. Iron ore surged past the \$US130 mark

after reports Beijing plans to provide at least 1 trillion yuan (\$212 billion) of low-cost financing to the nation's urban village renovation and affordable housing programs.

Expectations for iron ore restocking before February's Lunar New Year holiday period are also aiding the demand outlook.

CME believes public naive on gas future

The role of gas in the energy transition isn't well understood by the general public, says Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA boss Rebecca Tomkinson.

The chief executive of the prominent mining advocacy body, which represents gas suppliers and buyers in industry, on Wednesday appeared at a parliamentary inquiry into WA's

domestic gas policy. She said better education on the commodity's role in the State's energy transition was needed.

WA's domestic gas reservation policy requires big producers to save about 15 per cent of their supply for use in the local market. The inquiry also comes amid concern the State will run into supply issues near the end

of the decade. "Making sure that the clarity of that picture is the same for everybody so that no one's disappointed when we get to 2030 and find out that we are still actually utilising this level of gas input among other energy sources," Ms Tomkinson said.

"There is no replacement for gas today. There isn't, even if we wanted to turn it off."