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Media Release

Thompson's departure inevitable

"The departure of Alasdair Thompson from his role as head of the Employers and Manufacturers Association was inevitable," National Council of Women NZ (NCWNZ) President Elizabeth Bang said today.

NCWNZ is a long established not for profit organisation whose objective is to improve the status, quality of life and well-being of women, their families and the community.

"Mr Thompson's farcical comments that women are less productive in the workplace than men meant that continuing in his position as head of the organisation representing New Zealand employers was untenable", Elizabeth Bang said.

"The National Council of Women has been working for over 100 years to improve the status of women in New Zealand. While we have come a very long way from the era when Kate Sheppard and her colleagues were fighting for women's suffrage, Mr Thompson and those who share his views highlight the fact that we have unfinished business."

Elizabeth Bang said that one of the heartening aspects about the Thompson affair is the depth of feeling in society about the pay difference that exists between male and female employees who are doing the same work.

"Gender pay equity is a huge issue in this country. And there are others – for example the gross under-representation of women on company Boards.

"New Zealand's economic growth depends on the ability of our businesses to improve productivity. A huge opportunity is staring them in the face. Businesses need to create an environment which recognises and takes much better advantage of the huge talent pool of women in our labour force," Ms Bang concluded.

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