

5<sup>th</sup> March 2011

# Media Release



Embargoed until 12.01am Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2011

## Hunter organisation named one of only 98 Employer of Choice for Women organisations across Australia for 2011

For the third year in a row CatholicCare Hunter-Manning has been announced an Employer of Choice for Women by the Federal Government's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA).

The 2011 Employer of Choice for Women citation was received by only 98 organisations across Australia in the lead up to the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The citation is a prestigious acknowledgment by EOWA of organisations that are recognising and advancing women in the workplace.

CatholicCare employs close to 900 staff in the Hunter and Manning regions and of that number, more than 80% of Managers are women, including four out of the six Directors of CatholicCare.

Manager of CatholicCare's Out Of Home Care Services, Jessica Cocks, is one employee who enjoys the benefits of working for an Employer of Choice for Women.

As well as the responsibilities that come with coordinating and supporting the staff, foster carers, parents and children in this high-pressure field, Ms Cocks is a mother of two young children and is currently completing her Masters Degree in Social Work.

"I'm usually in the office four days per week and I have the flexibility of being able to work from home some days and can work my hours around activities I diarise with the kids, such as helping out with reading classes at school," Jessica Cocks said.

"Having the flexibility to be able to complete my hours but not necessarily having to be here from nine til five is a wonderful privilege. It assists me in maintaining a great work/ family life balance and has enabled me to further my education by studying my Masters which CatholicCare has been very supportive of," she said.

CEO of CatholicCare Hunter-Manning, Joseph McCarthy, said the Employer of Choice for Women citation further reinforces CatholicCare Hunter-Manning as one of the leading organisations in Australia providing an equitable workplace.

"As a major employer of women in the Hunter and Manning, we take our responsibilities of providing and promoting education and job opportunities for women very seriously, in a flexible and family friendly environment," Mr McCarthy said. "We do this while being very focused on the services we provide."

"We encourage promotion of women within all levels of the organisation. The citation allows women to be aware that CatholicCare Hunter-Manning has policies and procedures to support women and recognises and acknowledges their worth in our workplace," he said.

Ms Cocks agreed with Mr McCarthy saying the organisation was an ideal workplace for people with young families. "For women - and indeed, men - with families, it's a good place to come and work for a long time as the workplace is able to respond with your family's changing needs," Ms Cocks said.

**For an interview or photo opportunity with Jessica Cocks and/or CatholicCare CEO Joseph McCarthy, please phone CatholicCare Communications Manager Emma Blackford on 0408 292 355.**

[www.catholiccare.org.au](http://www.catholiccare.org.au)