



## **Boral Limited 2008 EOWA Employer of Choice For Women - Profiles**

### **Anne Project Engineer**

Most people in Boral are associated with building businesses. Project Engineer Anne is currently tearing one down.

Until recent times, Anne has been working on the construction of the massive Eastlink Motorway in Melbourne. However, with the project now at an end, her task is to 'deconstruct' and remove an asphalt plant, a concrete plant and the site offices, and return the site to the pristine grassed area it was before the project started. She has a team of 12 office and field staff to do this.

Anne joined Boral four years ago with an Honours Degree in Engineering and a Bachelor of Commerce degree. After two years with a consulting firm in Perth, she applied for a job in Boral Quarries because she wanted to see the results of her efforts, rather than just be generating reports.

She certainly got off to a good start because her first assignment was to set up a quarry 'from scratch' at Kalgoorlie. Next, she was tasked to supervise the construction of a sand processing plant.

"Right from the start, I was given a high degree of responsibility," she said.

"Despite the male-oriented environments, most of the people have been very welcoming and they have gone out of their way to be of assistance to me. It has been really great to work in such an environment," she said.

"Really, there have been no issues. I suppose that this has been helped by the company's 'Working with Respect' program – which applies to everyone regardless of gender, race, religion. It is an ongoing commitment by Boral.

"Also, Boral positively helps develop our careers. I am part of its Emerging Leaders program in Victoria – people who the company believes have got strong potential to develop and grow with the company in the years ahead," Anne said.

**Catherine**  
**Area Manager, Country**

Catherine joined Boral 11 years ago as part of the company's graduate program. Today, she is Area Manager, Country, for Boral Construction Materials – based in Ballarat.

She studied civil engineering and applied to join Boral while in her final year at university (RMIT). Her first position was at the Metro Quarries business in Melbourne, where she “did everything”, including driving water carts and large haul trucks - learning first hand how a quarry is run.

At that time, very few women undertook such tasks in quarries or were appointed to managerial positions. Did she have any problems with male workers? Well, initially she found that people were somewhat wary of a female in a managerial role.

However, “I am just myself, take it all in my stride. Pretty soon, I am just Catherine to them, rather than a female with a degree,” she said.

“Boral has good policies and indirectly I have benefited from them. The company had an established culture before I was employed here, and I have never been discriminated against or harassed by anyone at work. This is a great credit to Boral.

“Boral has the very good Springboard program, and although I have never taken part in the program myself I believe it is very valuable. In fact – I was a guest speaker at the last one in Melbourne. This was a really positive experience.

“Overall, I feel that I am a very valued person in the company and that I am well-rewarded for what I do. I am very happy here and the company is a very happy place.

“I am looking forward to a good career with Boral and I certainly don't think that there is a glass ceiling that will stop me in the years ahead,” she said

**Giovanna**  
**Manager, Human Resources Programs**

Only 11 years ago, Giovanna was a paid work experience student at Boral – but not for long. Today, she is Boral Limited's Manager, Human Resources Programs.

“Being a large company, I thought Boral would have good programs and benefits, and it would be a good place to put my ‘foot in the door’ to start my working career. Now I manage some of these programs and help develop new programs for Boral,” she said.

“Over the years, I have been responsible for quite a number of company-wide programs - including our ‘health and wellness’ program, EEO and diversity programs.”

Giovanna has experienced some great development opportunities within Boral. Highly regarded, a senior executive requested that she be sent to the Boral Industries Division in the United States, to work on a major communications development project – a sector in which she had prior experience in the company.

“Over the years, Boral has certainly helped me to take several career steps along the way. Many other women in the company have been helped by taking part in the Springboard program – which is specifically designed for females looking for direction and wanting to get started on a serious career in the company.”

In her role, Giovanna is very aware of the importance of maintaining a work/life balance. This has many benefits to both the company and employees by being able to combine a career with starting a family.

She has one small child and another is on the way. However, throughout the period on maternity leave, she was involved in company-wide HR programs and community partnerships – often using teleconferencing or computer links into the office from home.

“This helped me to remain in the loop on what was happening in the company and continue to contribute to some major programs I was working on. Additionally, when I returned to work, Boral created the position that I now hold and has also facilitated a mixture of office and home-based work, and which enables me to combine both work and family.

“I really enjoy my role and I am happy with being able to contribute to some very important initiatives for Boral. It works out very well for me - and for Boral,” she said.

**Kathryn**  
**Architectural Team Leader**

It was entirely coincidental that Kathryn joined Boral in April 2002. She and her son have Type 1 diabetes, and Boral and its employees have been the major Corporate fundraisers for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JRDF) for some time.

Not surprisingly, Kathryn and her family have been very active in working on JRDF promotions within the company – and Boral has encouraged her to do so. She has captained the 'Walk for Cure Diabetes' team, and also taken part in the Ride to Cure Diabetes, a major JRDF cycling event in Adelaide.

Kathryn said that she had received strong support from the company on the two occasions her son had been rushed to hospital. "They just said 'take whatever time you need to be with your family'. In turn, my son is actively involved with Boral as a Youth Ambassador, helping to educate employees about Type 1 diabetes and assisting in raising money for research, he loves the welcoming environment given to him when he visits Boral locations".

As an architectural team leader in Boral Clay and Concrete Products, Kathryn leads the masonry division in its dealings with all councils, commercial, residential and community building designers, architects, engineers and landscaping specialists: in fact everyone specifying Boral products in Victoria.

This is quite a workload, and involves a significant amount of travelling by car throughout the State – also negotiating Melbourne's traffic jams on her way to and from work.

Managing the work/life balance is very important to Kathryn. She tends to take her company-supplied laptop home so that she can catch up on more urgent matters.

"If you are passionate about your job, which I am, it is a matter of working as a team with your family and properly planning out the days ahead. I coordinate with my husband and my 15- year-old son to make it happen," Kathryn said. "The support of Boral in helping me to achieve this is very important."

## **Kylie**

### **General Manager, Corporate Affairs & Investor Relations**

In the 13 years from 1995, Kylie has moved through the ranks at Boral from the position of production manager at Boral Roofing's clay tiles plant at Wyee, NSW, to her current role as General Manager Corporate Affairs and Investor Relations at Boral's corporate head office in Sydney.

She left university with a degree in ceramic engineering: then gained four years of on-the-job experience with a competitor to Boral in Perth: rising to the position of production manager. Her move to Boral in a similar role opened the doors to many further opportunities.

Boral's production plants have traditionally been male domains – but this is changing. Kylie was among the first females in Boral to become a site manager. This, she said, was not because of an equal opportunity program, but because management appoints the people – male or female – they feel are best suited to the position.

During this period, the company sponsored her through the part-time Executive MBA program at the Australian Graduate School of Management; which brought her to the attention of the then Managing Director of Boral, Tony Berg. He offered Kylie a position directly assisting him in the Managing Director's office – a practical managerial role which complemented the completion of her MBA and provided an invaluable platform for her ongoing career progression in Boral.

The grounding for her present position included being a part of the 'project team' working on the demerger of Boral which created a new public listed company, Origin Energy. Corporate affairs and investor relations were areas she became involved with during that period, and she assumed greater responsibilities in those areas after the demerger.

Whilst Boral has programs to help females improve their ability to take on such positions, for example Kylie had an in-company mentor, she acknowledges that in Boral women are not appointed because they are female.

"Everyone, at all levels, has to earn their right to promotion. In doing so, they gain the respect of other people in the company," said Kylie. "Equal opportunity is a fact of life here."

**Nicole**  
**General Manager Queensland Giroto Precast**

Nicole certainly has an in-depth knowledge of the company that she now manages. She was one of the team that was involved in Boral's acquisition of the company and has recently been leading the growth projects.

She joined Boral about four years ago, armed with an MBA which was completely unrelated to the construction industry and also a chemical engineering degree. Having a technical background was an invaluable asset in building a career with the company.

Her first role in Boral was as a member of the Australian Construction Materials Division (ACM), working as Business Development and Planning Manager, based in Perth. However, she was soon transferred to Sydney and in a prime position to "put her hand up" for the position of General Manager of Giroto Precast, Queensland, when it became available.

"There were no problems with my appointment to this position. It was simply a matter of fair treatment and consideration, based on my skills and experience. This says something about the company, because I have now been told that I am the first female general manager in any pre-cast business in Australia," she said. "I feel that I have achieved this on my own merit."

Despite working in a substantially male-dominated world, Nicole does not feel that she is at any disadvantage being female, and says she is confident of gaining management support if she did face any such problems.

"This is a very intensive job and I generally work "seven to seven" Monday to Friday, but I have a fairly good work/life balance. Any new job involves spending a bit longer at work, getting a handle on things. However, if I roll the clock forward, maintaining a reasonable work/life balance won't be a problem – and I would not be here if I didn't think that I could achieve that," she said.

**Tess**  
**North Coast Regional Manager**

Most people use bricks to construct buildings. Tess has been building her career with these products.

Now the Northern Region Sales Manager for Boral Bricks, she joined Boral in September 2003 after about ten years in the industry - having previously worked as an account manager in sales for a competitor to Boral.

“Boral attracted me because it provided opportunities for me to expand and grow. A previous mentor had moved over to Boral and it was nice to know that Boral had people who I could look up to and really model myself on what they had achieved,” she said.

“Also, as a long-time single parent, Boral provided me the opportunity to again work on the Central Coast, where I live, and spend more quality time with my children. This was very important to me. In fact, right from the very start, the company has made it very clear that they fully support the importance of my family and I being a ‘complete package’.

“I like the fact that Boral actively supports and grows its skills base – men and women, and all age ranges. Where they can, they recruit from within, and women can develop within the business through specific programs such as Springboard.

“I attended the Springboard program about two years ago. Then, last year, I was invited back as a guest speaker, which itself is part of my own personal development process. And now they have invited me back again this year.

“At these meetings, I talk openly about how I reached my present position; also how I have fared as a single parent. Boral is very supportive of families and fully recognises that, sometimes, you must take time off work to tend to a sick child.

“Through Boral, I have also enjoyed the phenomenal experience of taking part in an Outward Bound Family Rediscovery Scholarship with one of my sons. It pushed us to achieve things we never thought we could, and also developed our mother-son relationship” Tess said.

## **Tracey**

### **General Manager Strategy and Planning,**

Being a major player in a highly competitive industry, Boral Clay and Concrete Products naturally undertakes intensive corporate strategy development and planning. As the division's General Manager Strategy and Planning, Tracey leads both of these processes and is responsible for outcomes which impact directly on her division's immediate and future profitability.

As part of this she initiates and manages a number of strategic projects each year; including cost reduction programs for the businesses, understanding and responding to moves by competitors, new market initiatives – in fact, a host of activities relating to issues, risks and opportunities perceived by the business units; and resolving them.

She came to Boral about 14 months ago from a senior managerial position in a consulting company. She was attracted to Boral because of its size, blue-chip status, strong branding, professional culture, the opportunities that the company presented to her and by “the type of people who work at Boral”.

“During my year or so at Boral, this impression has proved to be correct. Boral's values go pretty deep within the organisation. From my position as a General Manager, I can see how proactive Boral is about equal opportunity.

“Not everyone has the same view about what equal opportunity means, but a lot of training goes on. Also, the culture here is that everyone - employees as well as management - would frown at the unequal treatment of anybody in the company.

“Although in construction-related industries, there are not yet equal numbers of males and females in the top levels of organisations, the gender balance is certainly improving in Boral and women are being given the opportunity to try all types of jobs.

“In Boral today, a woman can go as far as she wants to – provided she has the skills to get there. Today, the position of CEO is certainly not out of reach,” Tracey said.

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