

**Media Statement  
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## **Audit Area Represents 'exciting' Boost for Women's Career in Accounting**

**August, 2010:** An increasing number of younger women are being drawn to a career in accountancy, and in particular jobs in audit.

One of the largest independent accountancy groups **Lawler Partners** has currently more women on its Audit & Assurance team than men, and their female employees say the benefits of travel, meeting people, training and responsibility are huge.

Kym Reilly, aged 28, joined Lawler Partner's Audit & Assurance practice in the Sydney office five months ago, after initially considering a career in fashion.

"I liked patternmaking after studying at East Sydney Tech in 2008, and was thinking about setting up a business, but then the industry collapsed with the GFC.

"Instead, I looked around for another option. I'd already completed an Economics degree, and thought that if I did a one-year conversion, I could work as an accountant for a fashion business after training in a Chartered Accountant's firm.

"Now, I like it so much I'm happy to stay," Ms Reilly added.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants ran a Newspan in 2008, showing the number of women going into accounting had almost doubled with almost 30% of chartered accountants being female.

According to the Institute's General Manager of Leadership and Quality Mr Lee White, anecdotal evidence points to many more women joining CA firms, and signing up for the audit teams.

"Audit is seen as a tremendous career opportunity for women, who clearly hold leadership roles throughout the audit profession, such as Merran Kelsall (Chair of the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board in Australia)," Mr White said.

Kym says the peak busy times for her audit team runs between July and October, and their clients range from Not-for-Profit organisations to large private and publicly listed companies..

This Lawler team usually works with an in-house management team, and checks through the financial and non financial aspects of a client.

"A typical day for us is to visit clients for most of the week, and go through their records and talk to them on how they run their business; you certainly learn what works, and what doesn't in this environment, and it allows us to provide valuable feedback to the client" she says.

With a degree in accounting and IT, Tracey Blasko has been with Lawler Partners for over five years, and is now Manager of the audit team in the Newcastle office.

“Accountants can be competitive, but we find that as a team, we’re very close knit. We work hard but we also have fun, especially on away jobs. This has created a great culture within the team and resulted in significantly lower turnover than experienced in most firms”

“In our team, you really know each other because of the travel, and we work directly with other team members while on site. It’s a team effort to get the job done.”

She says the team may consist of three to four people at different levels of experience, so learning is fast-tracked.

“Mostly, outsiders don’t really understand what’s involved for audits. It’s exciting to help our clients, understand their business and different industries and really add value to their business,” Ms Blasko adds.

Mr Clayton Hickey, head of the Audit & Assurance team, says Lawler Partners has over 20 auditors, and 250 professional staff through the Lawler National Alliance of firms that includes Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane, Rockhampton and Melbourne offices.

“Audit is a growth area, especially given the latest changes in financial reporting standards. We also run an active mentorship of our young and dynamic staff and that helps maintain retention.”

**For further information and interviews, please contact: Julianne Dowling on 0416 208 770**