



JULY • AUGUST

# WOMEN IN SECURITY

## M a g a z i n e

**TALENT HAS NO GENDER:**  
WHY COMPANIES NEED  
TO WORK HARDER TO  
BUILD MORE DIVERSE  
WORKFORCES

P12

**CHANGING THE  
WORLD, ONE  
ORGANISATION  
AT A TIME**

P8

**MEET LISA  
HARVEY-SMITH:**  
FIGHTING FOR  
WOMEN IN STEM

P76

**WHY FEMALE-  
LED STARTUPS  
NEED MORE  
SUPPORT**

P25

# CULTURE & BELONGING

# TALENT HAS **NO GENDER:**

## WHY COMPANIES NEED TO WORK HARDER TO BUILD MORE DIVERSE WORKFORCES

by **Julian Ranger**

*Julian Ranger, Executive President and Founder of personal data platform digi.me, explains why increasing diversity and inclusion build more rounded teams, better placed to change with the times and with tech advances.*

**W**e were delighted to see our Australian partner [Joanne Cooper](#), CEO of Australian Data Exchange and an all-round corporate powerhouse, featured in the May – June 2021 edition of Women in Security magazine.

Not just because it's entirely deserved—very few people work harder or with more passion—but because, as a great female leader at the top of her profession, she is one of a rare breed.

It is no secret that the pipeline of talent for jobs in engineering and technology is both male-dominated and insufficient. This leaves firms in a quandary. They all, naturally, want to recruit the best. And they often have urgent requirements to fill specific roles, which means they need to pick from the pool of available talent.

Australia lacks legislation—which exists in some countries such as the UK—requiring employers to discriminate in favour of women. So male dominance in engineering continues, and there is no obvious route to change this.

### **EVOLVING FOR EXCELLENCE**

Yet change we must, not least because we know the most diverse and inclusive teams are those that produce the most rounded products and services. Many heads and many diverse life experiences ensure solutions are fully thought out, applicable and relevant to as many people and circumstances as possible.

So, the question becomes: how do we best ensure as many voices as possible are at the table. The answer will get women, from an early age, perceiving technology and engineering as valid and desirable professions.





---

*"There are many young people who would have had a different career or found a new path if someone had assured them it was truly within their reach. We all need to work together to ensure as many young people as possible discover their full potential."*

---

I have long had a passion for building opportunity, for getting more people into engineering, and future proofing the profession. Technology is now at the heart of much of what we do, and want to do, as a society. We need a large workforce skilled in all aspects of technology to support today's technology, and develop tomorrow's. That workforce must be diverse and inclusive.

Role models like Joanne Cooper play a significant role in promoting diversity and inclusiveness. People can see in her someone they want to emulate, and a career to envy.

Jo grew up with a fantastically talented and driven tech mentor: her father, Australian IT pioneer Tom Cooper. He was a prominent figure in the 1980s PC era, and inspired and encouraged his daughter to follow in his footsteps.

## THE NEW NORMAL

Much hinges on how companies and industry leaders work to inspire and encourage the next generation, regardless of gender, colour, etc.

Back in 2008 my educational foundation Ranger Engineering Education Foundation (REEF) was grappling with the challenge of getting more students into engineering, to study subjects and disciplines that would best set them up for success.

This is not an issue to be solved overnight, but that does not mean we should do nothing. We must keep inching forward, step by step, towards creating the more diverse and inclusive teams we all want to see.

We can seek inspiration from organisations that have achieved diversity, such as the UK's armed forces, whose compelling and engaging recruitment campaigns normalise women in every role imaginable, and promote the idea that there is a role for everyone. Both these messages are important as we seek to widen what young people see as the range of career pathways available to them.

Small firms are limited in what they can achieve, but we all have a part to play in driving change and working towards greater diversity, in individual companies, and in society as a whole.

And we need to educate and inspire children before they become teenagers, make science more interesting, and show them role models they can aspire to, people like them in jobs they could do.

Many organisations are male dominated, but there is no reason female participation cannot be increased. We all need to take more concrete steps and expand our ambition to achieve greater diversity.



# digi.me

We need to show rather than tell, to offer up role models and positive reasons to change, even as we accept that, in the short term, progress will be slow.

Positively influencing six-year-olds now will not result in change for perhaps twenty years. But every step towards a better, more inclusive future is a worthy one.

There are many young people who would have had a different career or found a new path if someone had assured them it was truly within their reach. We all need to work together to ensure as many young people as possible discover their full potential.

Julian welcomes discussions around how to increase diversity and inclusion, and can be found on Twitter @rangerj.



**DO YOU KNOW A 'CHANGE CHAMPION' THATS WORKING DILIGENTLY ACROSS THE SECURITY INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT & EMPOWER WOMEN?**

**NOMINATE THEM TODAY FOR THE 2021 AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN SECURITY AWARDS**

