



# Sisters are doing it for themselves

**T**hen there were four – and it's probably a first for a top 100 company, to boot. Women hold up half the sky, as Mao Zedong famously put it, which Spark Infrastructure has taken to heart with the momentous decision to appoint two more women to the board so that half of its directors are women.

On Wednesday, it appointed Christine McLoughlin (NIB Holdings and Whitehaven Coal among other board spots) and Karen Penrose (AWE, Silver Chef and CFS Retail Property) to the board. They join Cheryl Bart and Anne McDonald, with the new appointments taking to eight the board's bench strength.

In fact, it was a big day for the sorority, with the new head of the Australian Energy Regulator, the Canada-born and now Melbourne resident (and dual citizen) Paula Conboy, finally getting her feet under her desk on Wednesday.

After 17 years in Canada, she has decided to return to Australia, where she worked for a time with the old Industries Assistance Commission and Sydney Water after doing some research at La Trobe Uni, where she arrived via John Kenneth Galbraith's alma mater, University of Guelph in Ontario.

And the AER, too, has led the (gender) way, since Conboy joins its two other directors, Cristina Cifuentes and Jim Cox, with Michelle Groves the chief executive.

