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Firms still drag feet in gender diversity

STEPHANIE BENNETT

ONE of Queensland's largest listed companies NEXTDC has been called out by a gender diversity advocacy group for having no women in its executive leadership team.

Chief Executive Women's senior executive census for 2017 identified 41 companies in the ASX200 as having no women in their executive teams. Fellow Queensland IT player TechnologyOne was also identified by CEW as having no women in its senior executive team, which the company disputed when contacted by *The Courier-Mail*.

CEW found men hold 79 per cent of the total senior executive positions on ASX 200 companies.

The findings come as Google was slapped with a lawsuit by three former female employees, who have claimed they faced gender discrimination within the tech giant.

Women in Technology co-president Dr Alison Rice said diversity strategies were not enough to get more women into senior roles in Australian tech companies.

"Unless that is operationalised nothing changes – talking is one thing but they do need to take action," she said.

A spokesperson for NEXTDC said the company was targeting an improvement in its gender diversity ratio, and that while men made up the six-person senior executive team, one quarter of its heads of department were female.

It also said about 28 per cent of its workforce were female, with a target of 30 per cent.

TechnologyOne said one of its seven-person senior executive team was female – Operating Officer Consulting Nancy Mattenburger – and that women accounted for 34 per cent of its work force.

"TechnologyOne is proud of our positive approach to diversity. We credit this with being a driver for our success," CEO Edward Chung said.

CEW president Kathryn Fagg said despite women being under-represented, the census showed improvement had been made at ASX 200 companies. "In 2017 there are twice as many women in leadership roles and the number of com-

panies with no women in their leadership has halved (from 2008)," Ms Fagg said.

Queensland childcare group G8 Education had one of the highest instances of gender balance in its executive ranks, with women taking out five of the nine top spots, or 56 per cent. Women comprised 55 per cent of Brisbane-based Tatt's senior executive team and 46 per cent at Suncorp.