



Corporate Plan

Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Corporate Plan for the 2022-26 period



This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the paragraph 35(1)(b) of the ***Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act)***.

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is a statutory agency established under the ***Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (WGE Act)***. The WGE Act requires non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees (relevant employers) to report to the Agency annually against standardised gender equality indicators (GEIs) by completion of a workplace profile and a reporting questionnaire.

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Director's Introduction

Ten years on from the establishment of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (WGE Act), we are on the brink of the next wave of reform to accelerate action on gender equality in Australian workplaces.

The year ahead will see the implementation of many of the 10 recommendations that resulted from the review of the WGE Act. Alongside that work, the Agency has developed a new strategy to help drive change.

On most metrics, workplace gender equality has improved since the Agency started collecting data from Australian employers in 2013. There are more women on boards and in senior management and the gender pay gap is declining. However, discrimination and gender stereotypes persist and estimates from our research show that, at current rates, it will take approximately 25 years to close the gender pay gap. That is too slow. We need to reinvigorate our efforts. It's well past time for gender equality in Australian workplaces.

Our efforts to achieve gender equality are informed by the findings from our unique dataset, which covers approximately 13,000 organisations and over 4.3 million employees, providing unrivalled insight into the state of gender equality in Australian workplaces.

The priorities outlined in this plan will help us increase our capacity to drive action by:

- ✓ Legislating changes to the WGE Act to establish new gender equality standards and enable the reporting of employer gender pay gaps
- ✓ Expanding our dataset so we are engaging more workplaces, such as the Federal Public Sector and voluntary reporting for State and Territory government entities
- ✓ Deeply analysing our data and developing new dashboards and targeted insights for employers, as well as resources and tools for change
- ✓ Motivating change through direct engagement with employers, the development of a Community of Practice for peer to peer sharing of best practice and an enhanced Employer of Choice citation
- ✓ Undertaking sustained communications campaigns for change, with both employers and the broader public
- ✓ Growing our team and expanding our capability and capacity.

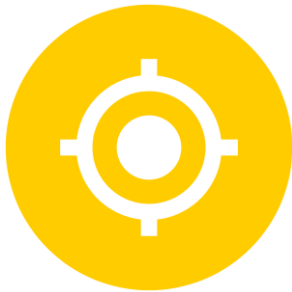
WGEA is valued and trusted. As a result, well placed to utilise all available levers to speed up the rate of change. Only then can we realise our vision for gender equality, where all people are fairly represented and equally valued and rewarded in the workplace.

Mary Wooldridge



Our Vision, Mission, Values and Purpose

Who we are and what we stand for



Our Vision

Our vision is achieving gender equality, where all people are fairly represented and equally valued and rewarded in the workplace



Our Mission

Our mission is to accelerate change to achieve gender equality in Australian workplaces by providing data backed insights, practical enabling support, tools and research, and accessible pathways to leading practice



Our Values

- Impartial
- Committed to Service
- Accountable
- Respectful
- Ethical



Our Purpose

We are charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces, including through:

- ✓ the provision of advice and assistance to employers, and
- ✓ the assessment and measurement of workplace gender data

Operating environment

The Agency continues to see improvements in gender equality in Australian workplaces, however, progress is slow, uneven and much work remains to be done.

Compared to a decade ago, when the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (WGE Act) passed, gender equality is now a mainstream issue in the business community and wider society. This is, in part, due our contributions of gender equality reporting and data insights, external media and communications campaigns and outreach (especially Equal Pay Day and the Annual Data Launch), regular speaking engagements and presentations, ongoing research collaborations and the public recognition of organisations as Employers of Choice for Gender Equality.

In February 2022, we released our eighth year of reporting data under the WGE Act, building on the compelling time series from our unique, world-leading dataset. By providing a detailed picture of the state of gender equality in Australia's workplaces, our data identifies the areas of strongest improvement (which is usually where employers have a direct influence on the outcome) and pinpoints where progress has slowed or stalled.

The Agency continues to produce research reports in collaboration with other organisations. For example, in 2021 in partnership with the Jumbunna Institute and the Diversity Council of Australia we released our first research collaboration examining where gender and diversity overlap to compound the effects of bias and discrimination at work. *Gari Yala (Speak the Truth): Gendered Insights* provides a deeper understanding of the intersection of gender and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity in the Australian workplace. Research like this report is vital to better understanding the drivers of the gender pay gap.

The Government undertook a review of the WGE Act, as suggested by the Agency. The resulting WGEA Review Report made 10 recommendations to accelerate the rate of change in workplaces. Implementation of these recommendations is currently going through the consultation and legislative process. Once enacted, these changes will have a far reaching impact on how employers engage and act on gender equality. This includes expanding gender equality reporting to include the public sector, publishing employer gender pay gaps, requiring large companies to set targets for improvement and collecting broader diversity data.



Gender equality indicators

The Agency monitors progress towards improved gender equality in Australian workplaces through the changes to metrics in the organisations reporting under the WGE Act since 2013-14.



22.8% Gender Pay Gap (total remuneration), amounting to women earning \$25,800 less, on average, than men, a drop of 0.5pp. Men are twice as likely to be highly paid than women



5.1pp increase in organisations that have conducted a **gender pay gap analysis**, up to 51.5%, but only 56% took action as a result



3pp increase in women on boards, up to 33%, but 74% of Boards comprise more than 60% men and 22% have no women directors



60% of employers offer paid parental leave with over 90% offering it equally to men and women. Of them, 81% also included superannuation



15.2pp increase in organisations providing access to **paid domestic violence leave**, with over half of all organisations (50.7%) offering it

The GEIs relate to areas that are critical to gender equality:

GEI 1	gender composition of the workforce
GEI 2	gender composition of governing bodies of relevant employers
GEI 3	equal remuneration between women and men
GEI 4	availability and utility of employment terms, conditions and practices relating to flexible working arrangements for employees and to working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities
GEI 5	consultation with employees on issues concerning gender equality in the workplace
GEI 6	any other matters specified by the Minister – currently sex-based harassment and discrimination

Strategic priorities 2022-23 and beyond

To accelerate change in Australian workplaces, we will focus on the following.

1

Enhance the reporting experience and expand our dataset

2

Generate knowledge, insights and tools for change through data

3

Drive broader, deeper action with employers

4

Enable and amplify national gender equality momentum

5


Grow the team and enhance capability to accelerate change

We will outline our performance and achievements against these priorities in our annual performance statement published in our Annual Report. We have identified the following key activities and targets and outcomes that we will use to assess our performance against each priority.

Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Enhance the reporting experience and expand our dataset	Continuous improvement of reporting experience for employers	New Questionnaire module operational	X			
		Improved Knowledge Hub and Help Desk responsiveness for reporting employers	→			
	Implementation of Federal, State and Territory Public Sector reporting program, supporting resources and tools and Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation	Voluntary federal public sector reporting in 2022 and mandatory operational in 2022-2023	X	X		
		In collaboration with Australian Public Service Commission, education resources and tools to support Public Sector reporting implemented in 2022-2023	X			
		State and Territory voluntary public sector reporting trials in 2022 and 2023	X	X		
		Establishment of public sector benchmarking, broader dataset comparisons and EOCGE citation	X	X	X	
		Opportunities for increased impact legislated (Act) or tabled (Legislative Instrument) and implemented	X	X		
	Support the consultation, legislation and implementation of the recommendations of the Review of WGE Act and its related instruments	Effective communications campaigns on pay gap transparency, new gender equality standards and indicators, collection of diversity data and other changes	X	X		

Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
<p>Enhance the reporting experience and expand our dataset</p>	<p>Work with the Respect@Work Council to measure and monitor sexual harassment prevalence, prevention and response</p>	<p>Meaningful measures of Sexual Harassment are identified and incorporated into WGEA reporting</p>	X	X		
	<p>Support the revision of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles as recommended in the Review of the Act</p>	<p>New Principles in place and communicated across Government</p>	X	X		
	<p>Develop and maintain partnerships and close collaboration with government agencies, including Office for Women, Gender Data Steering Group and APSC</p>	<p>Data sharing policies and protocols integrating into Reporting and Data Platform.</p>				

Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Generate knowledge, insights and tools for change through our data	Deliver targeted insights for reporting employers based on their industry / maturity levels	New Maturity Dashboard is used by employers to motivate change	X	→		
		New leading practice benchmarks developed and released	X	X		
		Employer and EOCGE feedback is used to prioritise revision and development of educational tools and resources	→			
	Generate new insights from expanded dataset	New insights released deepening understanding and engaging new discussions	X	X		
		Agency has increased digital access and engagement by employers and broader public, including with dynamic data platforms		X	X	
	Production of engaging and accessible visualisations, research findings, educational resources and tools and case studies	Gender equality tools tailored for small business			X	X


Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Drive broader, deeper action with employers	Development of a Gender Equality Communities of Practice to engage leading practice and all reporting employers	Community of Practice operational and actively utilised	X	→		
		Insights from employers and EOCGEs used to prioritise revision and development of educational tools and resources	→			
	Establish new Capacity Building team to work with employers to drive change	Team operational and engaging employers directly and via Community of Practice	X	→		
		Increase in number employers recognised as leading practice		X	X	X
	Develop and roll out enhanced EOCGE citation with new pathway to achieve leading practice	Build pipeline of high gender equality achieving organisations		X	X	X
		Updated and new tools to enable employers to take action and implement leading practice		X	X	X

Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Enable and amplify national gender equality momentum	Run campaigns for change that leverage WGEA data and insights to increase the momentum for progress	Delivery of targeted campaigns to improve gender equality outcomes	X	→		
	Utilise organisational pay gap transparency to motivate employers to accelerate change in gender equality	Organisational gender pay gap education campaign undertaken and increased use of assessment, policy and practice tools to address gender equality	→			
	Support and collaborate with others committed to gender equality to increase momentum	Increased partnerships on tools and research, data sharing and event collaborations	X	→		
	Revamp Agency website to enhance usability and improved access via Community of Practice and social media	Increased utilisation of tools and resources on website and improved click through rate from social media	→			

Plan 2022-23 and beyond

Priorities	Key activities	Targets / Outcomes	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
<p>Grow the team and enhance the capability to accelerate change</p>	<p>Implement workforce management and operational plan to support Agency growth</p>	<p>Staff recruited and onboarded in line with timeframe</p>	X	X		
		<p>Infrastructure in place, including new tools to facilitate collaboration and hybrid working environment</p>	X	X		
	<p>Deliver staff Training and Development and talent management plan to support and enable new Agency strategy</p>	<p>Staff have skills and capabilities to meet and deliver on new Agency priorities and initiatives</p>	X			

Performance as a regulator

The Agency is committed to achieving our objectives while seeking to minimise the impact on the entities we regulate. In accordance with the principles of regulator best practice outlined in the Regulator Performance Guide, the Agency will report on our performance against the principles.

As the Agency transitions from reporting on performance under the Regulator Performance Framework we will refine our outcomes-based performance indicators and measures. Our key activities and targets in this Corporate Plan consider and support the achievement of these principles. Specific activities and measures under each principle are below:

1

Continuous improvement and building trust:

Regulators adopt a whole-of-system perspective, continuously improving their performance, capability and culture, to build trust and confidence in Australia's regulatory settings.

Key Agency activities:

- Ensures communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective
- Actively contributes to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

Performance measures:

- Understands operating environment of regulated entities and provides appropriate guidance and information, ensuring communication with regulated entities clear, targeted and effective
- Periodically reviews its administration of reporting requirements to improve the reporting experience. The Agency will support the implementation of the recommendations of the Review of WGE Act and deliver changes to the reporting requirements

2

Risk-based and data driven:

Regulators maintain safeguards, using data and digital technology to manage risks proportionally to minimise regulatory burden and to support those they regulate to comply and grow.

Key Agency activity:

- Works to ensure actions are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed with compliance and monitoring approaches streamlined and coordinated

Performance measure:

- Undertakes regular reviews of its approach to promoting compliance and processes administered to respond to the current environment

3

Collaboration and engagement:

Regulators are transparent and responsive, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way.

Key Agency activity:

- WGEA is open and transparent in our dealings with relevant employers.

Performance measures:

- Ensures regular consultation and engagement with employers and other stakeholders on procedures and changes to reporting and ensures reporting requirements are available in clear, understandable, and accessible format
- The Agency is open and responsive to requests from regulated entities and establishes cooperative and collaborative relationships with stakeholders

Capability

Our organisational capabilities are core to our ability to deliver on our legislative mandate

Our small, highly-skilled team is key to the Agency's ongoing success. We have received funding to increase our approved average staffing level to 50 from 2022-23.

This small but growing team is motivated, highly qualified and able to draw on a wide range of industry and public sector experience. Employees work flexibly to meet the changing demands across the annual gender equality reporting, data analysis and external communication. External expertise supplements the team where necessary to bolster capability and capacity.

We are adding a Capacity Building team to the Agency to accelerate action on gender equality with a focus on new and effective ways of engaging directly with employers, including support to analyse the state of gender equality in their workplace, identify opportunities for change and implement strategies to bridge gaps.

As we continue to expand our impact and engage with employers through insights from our dataset, advice and education, the Agency's capability framework, which outlines the capabilities and professional competencies required of our employees, continues to evolve to enable us to manage the challenges over the life of the Plan. A professional development plan is being enhanced to support the expansion of our activities.

Core capabilities include survey design, data collection, analysis and management, provision of advice and education to employers, promoting awareness and action, governance and enabling services.

We continue to operate in a flat organisational structure. This enables us to work with agility and respond to the changing Australian workplace landscape.



Corporate and enabling services

The smart use of shared services arrangements contributes to our success

Under Memorandums of Understanding with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Service Delivery Office of the Department of Finance, the Agency accesses services in the areas of information technology, human resources, payroll, records management, security and other administration.

The Agency engages an external provider for the refinement and ongoing maintenance of our reporting portal and data management platform. Our specialist WGEA team has formulated an enhancement strategy for our platform to support the expansion of our dataset and enhanced insights in line with our future needs and strategic priorities.

Other external providers are engaged to develop and maintain the Agency's data visualisation tool, the Agency's digital presence and information security.

To enable our people to operate effectively we support flexible work approaches for all our team. For working days in the office we provide contemporary, safe, secure and sustainable office accommodation and facilities in Sydney's CBD that meet business needs.

Communication is key to all we do

As one of the Agency's key legislative mandates is to promote and improve workplace gender equality in Australia, our work aims to ensure the Agency remains as the nation's primary authority on the issue.

We undertake a range of activities including media outreach, digital communications campaigns, speaking engagements and presentations to increase understanding about the importance of gender equality, what the evidence base shows and how employers can take action. This provides us with regular opportunities to advance the public debate on gender equality issues in the workplace by presenting findings and insights from our world-leading dataset as well as the most recent research on gender equality.

We are working to diversify our communication approaches, channels and tools to expand and deepen our reach, motivate employers to take action and keep the broader community informed and engaged.

Risk oversight and management systems

Managing risk is everyone's responsibility at WGEA

Risk management is a key business process and essential management component at the Agency.

The risk management framework includes the:

- ✓ WGEA Risk Management Policy
- ✓ WGEA Risk Register
- ✓ WGEA Business Continuity Plan
- ✓ WGEA Fraud Control Plan
- ✓ WGEA Audit Committee

The Executive Management team is responsible for establishing the Agency's risk appetite, conducting an annual risk review as part of the Agency's strategic review and for reviewing and monitoring Agency-wide risks on a regular basis.

Risk is a standing agenda item for all Executive team meetings. Managers are responsible for applying the Agency risk management policy and practices in their areas of responsibility. In addition, each business unit is responsible for reviewing and monitoring its business unit risks at least quarterly.

To support our ability to effectively engage with and manage risk, the Agency will continue to improve risk assessment tools and treatment registers and report progress against the implementation of risk treatments to the Executive Management Team.

Every project plan developed within the Agency includes a risk assessment. External events, to which the Agency is a party, are also subject to a risk assessment and post-event risk review. We have also trialled a pre-mortem process for employer reporting.

The Agency has developed a system of internal controls and governance mechanisms which incorporate the advice of independent external experts. These are submitted for review and endorsement by the Audit Committee. The Agency is subject to annual audits by the Australian National Audit Office.

The WGEA Risk Management Policy is consistent with the Commonwealth Risk Management Framework. The Director is responsible for the overall management of risk with the Operations Executive Manager responsible for the centralised oversight of the risk system.

The Agency's overall risk appetite reflects the importance of being able to engage with risk to pursue opportunity and create value. We are committed to embedding a positive risk culture and enhancing risk maturity within the Agency. Effective risk management is the responsibility of all Agency staff. Agency staff are accountable for identifying and actively managing risks within their day-to-day work and environment.

All staff are required to undertake bi-annual risk management and privacy training and annual fraud awareness and security training. Management personnel are required to undertake risk training.

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Use of the coat of arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed on the It's an Honour website. www.itsanhonour.gov.au/coat-arms/index.cfm