

# 2015-16 Annual report against the Regulator Performance Framework

Workplace Gender Equality Agency

12 October 2016



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# Executive Summary

## Background

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA/the Agency) is a statutory body 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. Under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act, 2012*, non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees (relevant employers) are required to report annually to the Agency against six gender equality indicators

The reporting year extends from 1 April to 31 March with a report submission period from the subsequent 1 April to 31 May each year.

WGEA's key performance indicators (KPIs) under the Regulator Performance Framework were developed in consultation with the Employment Portfolio and the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council (NWRCC) was approved by the Minister for Employment and published on the Agency website.

This report outlines the findings of the Agency's first self-assessment report under the Regulator Performance Framework.

## Findings

Overall the Agency has found the KPIs and measures to be meaningful in describing its regulatory role and identifying opportunities for reducing regulatory impact.

For the following KPIs the Agency is satisfied, that, within the constraints of existing legislative requirements, Agency resources and necessary lead time to effect change that the regulatory framework is working well:

- KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities
- KPI 2 - Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective
- KPI 6 - Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

For the remainder of the KPIs the Agency has identified some areas where future improvements could be made especially in respect to transparency and streamlining of processes:

- KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed
- KPI 4 - Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated
- KPI 5 - Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities

## Key to symbols

Throughout the Agency's first annual Regulator Self-Assessment, traffic light symbols will provide a quick visual indicator on how WGEA sees its current performance level as a regulator.



**Working well**



**In progress but room for improvement**



**More work required**

## WGEA Regulatory Performance Framework Summary Table

KPI	Measure	Status
<b>KPI 1:</b> Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities.	1.1 Understanding operating environment of regulated entities	●
	1.2 Minimising the potential for unintended negative impacts	●
	1.3 Implementing continuous improvement strategies to reduce the costs of compliance	●
<b>KPI 2:</b> Communication with regulated entities in clear, targeted and effective	2.1 Providing appropriate guidance and information	●
<b>KPI 3:</b> Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed.	3.1 Applying a risk-based proportionate approach	●
<b>KPI 4:</b> Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated.	4.1 Implementing continuous improvement strategies to reduce the cost of compliance	●
	4.2 Ensuring processes administered are transparent and streamlined	●
<b>KPI 5:</b> The Commission is open and transparent in its dealings with regulated entities.	5.1 Ensuring reporting requirements are available in clear, understandable and accessible format	●
	5.2 Remaining open and responsive to requests from regulated entities	●
	5.3 Publishing the Agency's performance measurement results in a timely manner	●
<b>KPI 6:</b> The Commission actively contributes to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks.	6.1 Periodically reviewing its administration of reporting requirements	●
	6.2 Establishing cooperative and collaborative relationships with stakeholders	●

# Introduction

## Regulator Performance Framework

### The Agency

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA/the Agency) is a statutory body 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. The Agency's vision is for women and men to be equally represented, valued and rewarded in the workplace.

The Agency has an average staffing level of 30 and an annual appropriation of approximately \$5 million.

### The Act

Under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act, 2012*, non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees (relevant employers) are required to report annually to the Agency against six gender equality indicators (GEIs):

- GEI 1: gender composition of the workforce
- GEI 2: gender composition of governing bodies
- 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: sex-based harassment and discrimination.

### The Data

The Agency's dataset is based on 4,707 reports submitted on behalf of approximately 12,000 employers and covers more than 4 million employees. 2015-16 was the third year of reporting under the Act and data released in mid-November provides important insights on trends in Australian workplaces in respect to Gender Equality.

### Compliance Requirements

For the 2015–16 reporting period and onwards, a relevant employer will comply with the Act if it:

- lodges a report containing required information each year on time
- complies with the notification and access requirements
- meets minimum standards or, if a minimum standard is not met, makes improvements against it by the end of two further reporting periods
- has the report signed by the chief executive officer (CEO)
- if asked, gives the Agency information for the purpose of reviewing compliance
- does not give false or misleading information in a report, or when providing information as requested by the Agency for the purpose of reviewing compliance with the Act.

To comply with notification and access requirements under the Act each relevant employer must:

- Inform its employees and members or shareholders that it has lodged its report with the Agency and advise how the report may be accessed
- Provide access to the report to employees and members or shareholders
- Inform employee organisations with members in its workplace that the report has been lodged
- Inform its employees and those organisations with members in its workplace of the opportunity to comment on the report to the employer or the Agency.

The Minister will, by legislative instrument, set minimum standards in relation to specified gender equality indicators, specified relevant employers and specified reporting periods.

Following consultation with industry, peak bodies and community groups, the Minister has set a new minimum standard as outlined in the [Workplace Gender Equality \(Minimum Standards\) Instrument 2014](#). This minimum standard, as set out in the [instrument](#), has been in effect from the 2014-15 reporting period.

In order to meet the minimum standard, a relevant employer with **500 or more employees** must have a policy or strategy in place that specifically supports gender equality in relation to one, or more, of the following:

- GEI 1 - gender composition of the workforce
- 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 6 - any other matters specified by the Minister: sex-based harassment and discrimination

## The Reporting Process

The reporting year extends from 1 April to 31 March with a report submission period from the subsequent 1 April to 31 May each year. The Agency has established a secure online portal to facilitate report submission. Reporting organisations log into the portal using AUSKey authentication and complete the following six steps:

- Confirm organisation reporting details
- Complete workplace profile
- Complete reporting questionnaire
- Complete notification and access requirements
- CEO sign-off confirmation
- Submit report

## Non-compliance

There are consequences for non-compliance:

- The Agency may name a non-compliant employer in a report to the Minister or by electronic or other means
- Non-compliant employers may not be eligible to tender for contracts under the Commonwealth and some state procurement frameworks.

## Development of WGEA key performance measures

WGEA's key performance indicators (KPIs) under the Regulator Performance Framework were developed in consultation with the Employment Portfolio and the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council (NWRCC) was approved by the Minister for Employment and published on the Agency website.

Consideration of suitable KPIs for the Agency's regulatory activity focused on a number of areas:

- the diverse profile of our reporting organisations,
- the prevailing legislation
- the available technology,
- the size of the Agency; and
- the evidence available for collection.

## Reporting organisations

Our reporting organisations are a diverse group ranging in size from 100 to over 170,000 employees across 19 industries and all states and territories. In our regulatory role the Agency needs to be cognisant of this diversity and engage with our regulated entities using a variety of forums and mechanisms; provide specialised advice where appropriate and options for report submission which meet the needs of organisations with different levels of IT maturity.

## Legislation

The requirements of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act, 2012* and associated Legislative Instruments provide for the collection of a unique and world leading data set. It is expected adaption to these requirements will take some time for reporting organisations and time is also necessary to determine which requirements best deliver on the Agency purpose of improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. At the time these KPIs were developed reporting online under the Act had only been in place for two years.

The impact of amendments to the *Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)* (the Legislative Instrument) took effect on reporting requirements in 2015-16.

The lead time for legislative change, inclusive of a thorough consultation process can impact the ability to amend the Agency's regulatory framework in a timely manner.

## Technology

The online reporting functionality assists reporting but improvement of the system is an iterative process as the lessons from practical experience and impact of change to the Legislative Instrument are incorporated. The lead time for system improvements can be 12 to 18 months.

## Agency capacity

With an average staffing level of 30 and a modest annual appropriation it is important that WGEA focuses our limited resources efficiently to the actions which will most improve our performance as a regulator and we appreciate the partnership of our stakeholders in assisting to identify those priorities through feedback and consultation.

## Available Evidence

In development of key performance indicators it was important to consider what evidence was readily available to demonstrate how well the Agency executes its regulatory function. The Agency has included a number of quantitative and qualitative measures and notes that some activities and measures are applicable across multiple KPIs.

## Key to symbols

Throughout the Agency's first annual Regulator Self-Assessment, traffic light symbols will provide a quick visual indicator on how WGEA sees its current performance level as a regulator.

# KPI 1 - Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities

## Measure 1.1

### Understanding of the operating environment of regulated entities

#### 1.1.1 Stakeholders are engaged to enhance the clarity and minimise the compliance costs of completing the reporting questionnaire

In 2015-16 the Agency conducted a confidential online survey of its core stakeholders, the 4670 reporting organisations. The survey covered a range of issues including perceptions of WGEA's performance as a regulator and knowledge of WGEA products including competitor analysis benchmark reports, educational tools and resources. 2,433 survey responses were received. Specific results will be included throughout this report and the findings will be used to inform and guide change.

This survey was in addition to the established consultation mechanisms of the User Working Group and Data Consultation Group who were engaged throughout the year for input on various reporting related issues.

Senior Advisers in the Advice and Reporting Unit maintain a log of feedback from regulated entities whether over the phone or email or during the Agency's webinar series. This log is reviewed and actioned before reporting each year and has led to changes to the reporting questionnaire, workplace profile and education resources.

#### 1.1.2 The Agency undertakes environment scanning to review and modify its regulatory impact to meet legislative requirements and minimise compliance costs

The Agency and the team business planning process includes a scan of the environment. Agency staff are out and about speaking at public functions (62 in 2015-16), coordinating CEO and industry roundtables and attending a variety of forums and meetings. These activities together with media monitoring and participation in the Community of Practice for Commonwealth Regulators keep Agency staff attuned to the prevailing environment and open to opportunities to improve performance.

## Measure 1.2

### Minimising the potential for unintended negative impacts

#### 1.2.1 The Agency undertakes regular, ongoing consultations and engagement with stakeholders on policies and procedures, including independent experts and industry associations to meet legislative requirements, ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs.

The Agency has a Data Consultation Group which is comprised of independent experts and industry associations. The focus of this group is on the use of the data collected which helps ensure that there are not redundant data being collected. This in turn supports minimising compliance costs by ensuring that the information collected is required and used. The most recent consultation identified that data collected is largely relevant and, if anything, data could be more granular.

#### 1.2.2 The Agency seeks and responds to feedback from regulated entities to ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs.

The Agency has a range of accessible feedback mechanisms by way of established working groups and the stakeholder survey. In addition Agency contact details are included on the website, in correspondence and in guidance materials. In 2015-16 the Agency met its target of responding to email inquiries within two working

days. For more complex inquiries an interim response is provided to inform of progress. Phone inquiries are either addressed immediately or promptly followed up. Staff are allocated to daily monitoring of and response to phone and email messages.

### **1.2.3 Regulatory activities co-designed with regulated entities to meet legislative requirements, ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs.**

The Agency has formed a User Working Group which has representatives covering reporting organisations from a variety of industries and of different sizes and structures. During 2015-16 this group was called upon for input into changes necessary due to implementation of the amendments to *Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)* (the Legislative Instrument).

Gender equality educators' roundtable s are conducted bi-annually. These events assist to identify emerging gender equality issues and opportunities for collaboration to fulfil the legislative requirement to support employers to improve gender equality outcomes.

## **Measure 1.3**

### **Implementing continuous improvement strategies to reduce the costs of compliance**

#### **1.3.1 The Agency develops and undertakes a program of reporting review and improvement to meet legislative requirements, ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs**

Changes to the Legislative Instrument altered reporting requirements in 2016. Some new reporting requirements were introduced and others discontinued. In response, the Agency introduced a suite of changes to the online reporting system and to the format and content of the Workplace Profile and Compliance Questionnaire. All guidance documentation was reviewed.

The Agency reviews the operation of the IT systems related to reporting on an annual basis and invests in system enhancements which give priority to improving the experience for reporting organisations whether through functionality, ease of use or clarity of layout. In 2015-16 a significant development was the functionality which allowed reporting organisations the option of pre-populating parts of the compliance questionnaire with responses from the previous year. Over three quarters (79%) of reporting organisations took up this option. Additional help text and pop-ups were added to the system and data validations within the workflow were enhanced.

In 2015-16 the Agency also introduced a new telephone system allowing a more professional service for managing inquiries which reduced wait times and ensured reporting organisations had a quick turnaround to their inquiries.

## KPI 2 - Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

### Measure 2.1

#### Providing appropriate guidance and information

##### **2.1.1 The Agency reviews guidance to ensure that they comply with government accessibility guidelines.**

All written guidance for reporting organisations on the Agency website meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) adopted by the Australian government. In addition to printed guidance material the Agency provides a range of webinars with audio and visual content (with transcripts) covering reporting requirements and how to report. These webinars are recorded and available from our website.

##### **2.1.2 Approved procedures and guides for communications are periodically reviewed and amended to reflect stakeholder feedback on effective communications and are available for staff use when interacting with regulated entities.**

All guidance material was either developed in 2015-16 or underwent comprehensive review in 2015-16.

Changes to the *Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)* altered reporting requirements in 2016. In response the Agency made amendments to the format and content of the Workplace Profile and Compliance Questionnaire required to be completed by reporting organisations.

The Agency has formed a User Working Group which has representatives covering reporting organisations from a variety of industries and of different sizes and structures. Feedback on the proposed changes to the Workplace Profile and Questionnaire formats were sought, considered and where possible, incorporated into the final product and into the supporting online educational material. By way of closing the communications loop the outcome of the consultation forum was also shared with the User Working Group.

##### **2.1.3 The Agency integrates communication strategies in all externally facing projects to ensure efficient and clear communication with regulated entities.**

All Agency project plans include a stakeholder engagement plan. In addition the Agency has a coordinated schedule for external communications which was reviewed and updated during 2015-16.

##### **2.1.4 The Agency communicates appropriately with regulated entities to support proactive compliance to minimise action to redress non-compliance**

During 2015-16 the Agency utilised multiple forms of communication to inform and prepare reporting organisations for their reporting obligations and to assist them with the process.

These include:

- Media release regarding the commencement of reporting
- Online guidance and calculators
- Webinars
- Targeted direct email campaigns to CEOs and nominated reporting contacts
- System generated pop ups with guidance messaging
- System generated specific emails regarding data quality anomalies

- Registered post advice regarding potential non-compliance status
- Cross Agency telephone follow ups with CEOs and reporting contacts
- Industry and CEO roundtables where issues and information can be shared
- Stakeholder survey
- Response to phone and email inquiries and comments

Agency communications outline who to contact or where to find additional information if required. Email inquiries receive a response within two working days.

### **2.1.5 The Agency provided timely and accessible telephone support for reporting organisations during reporting periods [1 April to 30 June]**

During the period 1 April to 30 June 2016 the Agency received 6,157 phone calls to the main reception number. 2,415 of these calls were able to be managed by first line help and the remaining 3,742 were referred to Senior Advisers for more detailed assistance.

The implementation of a new phone system improved the experience for the clients and provided better metrics for the Agency which allowed for a monitoring of call volumes and a quick response in terms of allocation of resources. Despite the size of the Agency and the high call volume the average time on hold to reception during this period was 11 seconds and the average time on hold to speak with Senior Advisers was 2 minutes 50 seconds.

All Agency staff undertake annual training to enable them to professionally and efficiently assist reporting organisations during the peak workload of the report submission period.

In all 88% of respondents to the 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey found telephone assistance provided by WGEA to be either effective or extremely effective.

## KPI 3 - Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

### Measure 3.1

#### Applying a risk-based, proportionate approach

##### **3.1.1 The Agency adopts a transparent and risk management approach to exercising discretionary powers under Section 19D of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*.**

Under Section 19D of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act, 2012* (the Act), the Agency may, by electronic or other means name an employer if they fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with the requirements of the Act. In practical terms, the list of non-compliant employers will appear on the Agency website and in the Annual Report. A reasonable excuse must not simply be a deliberate act of non-compliance rather it should be a circumstance that prevented the relevant employer from meeting their requirement which was unforeseeable or outside the organisation's control.

In 2015-16 the Agency exercised discretion and did not name (DNN) 11 employers who were not compliant with the Act based on evidence of a reasonable excuse.

The most common reason for a decision to be made to DNN an organisation is where the organisation is in receivership or in liquidation and there is no sale of the business as an ongoing concern. The evidence to validate these circumstances may include a public notice of administration or notice from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

WGEA has an established process to investigate, validate and document the circumstances of organisations and the ultimate approval for DNN rests with the Accountable Authority of the Agency.

A potential improvement to the transparency of this process is to publish additional information on the Agency website. This is under consideration by the Agency.

##### **3.1.2 The Agency adopts a transparent and risk management approach to exercising discretionary powers under Section 17 of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*.**

Under Section 17 of the Act, the Agency may approve a request to extend the period of time for reporting organisations to submit their annual report. The extension cannot exceed six months and it must be considered that there are reasonable grounds for the extension.

Granting extensions to reporting organisations can lead to a delay in data cut off and less time for detailed analysis by the Agency. The production of publications such as *Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard* and the annual data launch may also be impacted. Timely provision of quality data must be balanced with support to employers who are unable to meet the report submission deadline.

The Agency granted 297 extensions of time to reporting organisations in 2015-16 from a total of 508 requests.

The reasons for approval of extensions vary but include:

- the CEO being unavailable to sign and approve submission of the report,
- the key contacts have suffered an illness,
- additional time is required to check the data,
- the person charged with the responsibility of submitting the report is inexperienced in the preparation of the information and didn't realise how much work is involved,
- the organisation is experiencing issues with AUSKey,
- the organisation has undergone a restructure and access to information has been restricted
- a change of contact details has resulted in the correspondence from the Agency regarding reporting not reaching the relevant person

Each request for extension is discussed with the organisation. WGEA Senior Advisers are frequently able to assist organisations with their reporting issues enabling them to report on time and negating the need to grant an extension.

A potential improvement to the transparency of this process is to publish additional information on the Agency website. This is under consideration by the Agency.

### **3.1.3 The Agency regularly reviews its approach to promoting compliance within legislative parameters.**

Each year, the Agency communicates regularly with all chief executive officers (CEO) and report contacts, from reporting organisations, on their reporting obligations and offers them assistance in complying with the Act. After the report submission due date, the Agency is required to write to employers who have not submitted a report to inform them that they have 28 days to submit their report or risk being non-compliant with the Act. In effect, this gives employers three months to submit their report.

As appropriate for the initial two years of reporting under the Act, the Agency expended considerable effort to follow up primary report contacts and CEO's of organisations who are persistently late reporters or choose not to submit a report and ensure that every assistance was provided for them to meet their legislative obligations.

Given the limited resources of the Agency, this year the Agency has reviewed its approach and will redirect some of this effort and energy into activities aimed to further supporting employers who genuinely wish to promote and improve gender equality in their organisations. A likely consequence will be a longer list of non-compliant organisations published in November 2016.

The Agency, however, has also reviewed the timing and targeting of email correspondence to ensure early engagement with organisations who experienced reporting difficulties in 2015 or who were non-compliant.

## KPI 4 - Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated

### Measure 4.1

#### Implementing continuous improvement strategies to reduce the cost of compliance

##### 4.1.1 The Agency undertakes a program of reporting review and improvement

Improving ease of reporting is a high priority and in 2015-16, the Agency introduced pre-population of the reporting questionnaire allowing responses from the previous year to be used. Pre-population was restricted to areas of the questionnaire which were least likely to change year on year and this option was taken up by 79% of reporting entities.

In 2015-16 the Agency also commenced an IT pilot project to explore options for automated reporting which have the additional potential to capture information on non-manager occupational categories on a more granular basis giving greater opportunities for comparison. The project has involved working across government and with the software industry to scope workable and sustainable solutions.

The Agency will use its biennial report to the Minister and the benefit of the experience of three years of data collection and analysis to explore ways to collect data which will provide better insight and drive positive change while minimising the impact on employers. The report to the Minister is currently in development and will be submitted in February 2017.

##### 4.1.2 The Agency undertakes an ongoing program of education of reporting entities to minimise the compliance costs of reporting as required by legislation

WGEA has a suite of over 60 online education resources with the Agency's website acting as an information hub. In 2015-16 there were 22, 669 downloads of reporting-related resources. 88% of respondents to the 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey found the reporting resources on the WGEA website to be either effective or extremely effective.

The Agency held 14 Australia-wide webinars including live demonstrations of the online reporting system, three teleconferences hosted by the Australian Taxation Office and a series of information sessions to assist companies seeking help with their annual compliance reports.

Replacing face-to-face workshops with webinars allowed the Agency to expand its reach more than fivefold. There were 1524 reporting webinar participants and a further 1,363 viewed the recordings of the webinars on YouTube. 79% of respondents to the 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey found WGEA teleconferences and webinars to be either effective or extremely effective.

All reporting related resources and training was either developed or reviewed in 2015-16 and included important information on new reporting requirements for the year.

### Measure 4.2

#### Ensuring processes administered are transparent and streamlined

##### 4.2.1 The Agency ensures legislated reporting requirement procedures are transparent and appropriately administratively simple

A level of complexity remains in both what is reported annually and the means of collection.

There will always be a balance to be struck between comprehensive quality data and ease of compliance. Reporting under the Act, as it stands, requires employers to draw on business information from a range of sources and systems. The Agency will continue to work across government and with the software

community and relevant employers to explore options to streamline the processes in an economically sustainable way.

The Agency ensures it provides expert tailored advice and step by step guidance to assist reporting organisations to meet their compliance obligations. The templates currently used were designed to suit different levels of IT system maturity and validations are inbuilt in the reporting workflow which reduces the opportunity for error.

## KPI 5 - Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities

### Measure 5.1

#### Ensuring reporting requirements are available in a clear, understandable and accessible format

##### 5.1.1 All materials are available from the website and are clear, understandable and accessible.

In all 88% of respondents to the 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey considered reporting resources on the WGEA website to be either effective or extremely effective. User feedback is incorporated into enhancing the education and information materials.

The Agency website meets WCAG 2.0 requirements. Materials vary and include written guidance, screen shots, templates, indicative formats, calculators and videos. Webinars that are conducted are recorded and transcribed for ongoing access.

### Measure 5.2

#### Remaining open and responsive to requests from regulated entities

##### 5.2.1 The Agency actively seeks feedback and takes action to improve its regulatory activities

The Agency has a range of accessible feedback mechanisms including established working groups and the stakeholder survey. In addition Agency contact details are included on the website, in correspondence and in guidance materials.

The Agency maintains a customer records management system to record and analyse interactions. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2016, the Agency responded to 8,181 reporting related issues either by phone or email. Analysis of the nature of these inquiries help the Agency establish priorities for both system improvements and amendments to process or guidance material.

##### 5.2.2 The Agency undertakes regular, ongoing consultations and engagement with stakeholders on the operation of the regulatory framework to meet legislative requirements, ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs.

The 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey, the Data Consultation Group and the User Working Group are all channels by which the Agency engaged with stakeholders to enhance the operations of the regulatory framework.

The increased national focus of the Agency in 2015-16 ensured more interaction with stakeholders through speaking at public functions (62 in 2015-16), coordinating CEO and industry roundtables and attending a variety of forums and meetings. These activities have built on existing cooperative networks and established new relationships. New opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with external organisations have also been identified.

In addition the Agency consulted broadly across government to explore means of streamlining reporting and enhancing the data collection process. The Australian Taxation Office, Department of Employment and Australian Bureau of Statistics were just some of the entities engaged.

## **Measure 5.3**

### **Publishing the Agency's performance measurement results in a timely manner**

#### **5.3.1 Regulator Performance Framework KPI results are published annually to the website**

This is the first year of publication of Regulator Performance Framework KPI results and the requirement to publish by 31 December 2016 was met.

## KPI 6 - Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

### Measure 6.1

#### Periodically reviewing its administration of reporting requirements

##### 6.1.1 The Agency complies with requirements to report to Government

Section 12(2A) of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act, 2012* requires the Agency to submit a report to the Minister on the progress achieved in relation to gender equality indicators (GEIs) as soon as practicable after the end of the two year period ending on 31 May 2016, and each later two-year period.

With the approval of the Minister this report will be submitted by the end of February 2017. This will ensure inclusion of data from the 2015-16 reporting period. The inclusion of data from three years of reporting will provide a more meaningful analysis of the progress achieved in relation to the GEIs.

The report is currently under development and may also include some broader commentary on the operation of the legislation in practical terms together with an overview of how the Agency collects, uses and reports on data collected under the Act.

##### 6.1.2 The Agency actively participates in and contributes to reviews of its administration

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency was not subject to a review of its administration in 2015-16.

The Agency did contribute to the reduction of regulatory burden within the Employment portfolio through the implementation of an option to pre-populate the parts of the online reporting questionnaire with responses from the previous year. This option was taken up by 79% of all reporting organisations.

### Measure 6.2

#### Establishing cooperative and collaborative relationships with stakeholders

##### 6.2.1 The Agency undertakes regular, ongoing consultations and engagement with stakeholders on the effective and efficient operation of the regulatory framework to meet legislative requirements, ensure clarity and minimise compliance costs.

The 2015-16 Stakeholder Survey, the Data Consultation Group and the User Working Group are all channels by which the Agency engaged with stakeholders to enhance the operations of the regulatory framework.

The increased national focus of the Agency in 2015-16 ensured more interaction with stakeholders through speaking at public functions (62 in 2015-16), coordinating CEO and industry roundtables and attending a variety of forums and meetings. These activities have built on existing cooperative networks and established new relationships. New opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with external organisations have also been identified.

In addition the Agency consulted broadly across government to explore means of streamlining reporting and enhancing the data collection process. The Australian Taxation Office, Department of Employment and Australian Bureau of Statistics were just some of the entities engaged.