

Gender Equality Action Plan

2021/22-2025/26



VICTORIA
State
Government

Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond. We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage with, Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country and the maintenance of spiritual and cultural lore. We especially recognise the contributions of First Nations women at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and are committed to a culturally safe and equitable workplace for them to continue to thrive.



Further acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of DELWP's staff-led networks in contributing to this plan and its development. Staff-led networks in the public service are integral to our work supporting an inclusive Victoria, and this gender equality action plan (GEAP) is the result of their tireless advocacy.

Intersectionality

DELWP recognises the diversity and expansiveness of gender that exists beyond the binary categories of 'man' and 'woman' and their accompanying sociocultural norms and ideas. We empower our people to affirm their identity at work. Throughout our GEAP, when referencing women, our discussions consider and include transgender women and gender diverse people who align or identify with womanhood.

We acknowledge the limitations that the language and approaches of this plan pose for encapsulating trans and gender diverse experiences. However, the Department commits to the inclusion of gender diverse identities within the actions of this GEAP.

We also acknowledge that gender bias can be compounded for employees who hold multiple marginalised identities. This includes but is not limited to people who are Culturally, Faith and Linguistically Diverse, First Nations, LGBTQIA+, having caring responsibilities, or living with a disability..

The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector has not yet completed a compliance check on our Gender Equality Action Plan. We may update the plan following their compliance check process.

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Message from the Secretary

The Gender Equality Action Plan 2021/22-2025/26 of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning provides a critical milestone to make our department more effective and a better workplace. It is our inaugural response to the new *Gender Equality Act (2020)* but the Plan also takes our commitment to gender equality to the next level. The GEAP provides a practical plan for sustained action beyond critical objectives such as equal representation, pay equity and freedom from discrimination and harassment. The GEAP also puts our focus on:

- enhancing our commitment to safe and respectful workplaces
- accelerating intersectional representation
- deep-diving into targeted areas to make meaningful change.

We know that a diverse workforce which fosters belonging and reflects the community it serves provides the best mix of views and ensures stronger advice to government.

DELWP has made important progress towards achieving gender equality. The Gender equality action plan contributes to a culture at DELWP where equality is championed and people are empowered, where flexible work is business as usual, and transparency and fairness are the guiding principles of the way we work.

The success of our DELWP staff to date in progressing gender equality should continue to fuel our ambition for a workplace where all people can contribute equally and are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

There is much work still to be done - particularly to promote an inclusive environment of advancement and opportunity for our trans colleagues, for women with disability, for women of colour and for women of all ages. DELWP acknowledges intersectionality and its effect on gender inequality. We know that achieving true gender equality will require new and different ways of working and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to addressing it.

It is important that we recognise gender equality is not just an issue for women, advancing towards it benefits us all in becoming a more inclusive society. I am personally a champion for this, reflecting on the department's focus on enabling and supporting paternity leave uptake by men, and how it has benefitted them directly and their partners and families.

This action plan is a key pillar of the DELWP Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and it sets out a range of objectives and actions aligned to key indicators under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

While the Plan's actions and measures are vital, we also know that it is our day by day, individual choices and behaviours that determine whether we are actually living our shared values – or not. Together, we can renew our commitment to a 'speak up' culture and challenge unacceptable behaviours to eliminate sexism and bias in the workplace. Every one of us within the department has a role to play. With our wide network of over 400 Safe and Respectful Workplace leaders, I am confident we can do even more together in the future.

I reaffirm our department's commitment to building a workplace that is inclusive and equitable, where all people are given opportunities for success and to reach their full potential – starting with a gender equal workplace.



John Bradley, Secretary

1. Case for change

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) recognises that it is important for our people to understand our actions towards progressing gender equality, and we are committed to bold action to ensure the department continues to reflect a diverse and inclusive workplace. We understand that with continued efforts towards gender equality within our workplaces, DELWP prides itself as a safe employer within the Victorian government, focusing on our people's safety in addressing gender discrimination and inequality.

Of the DELWP employees who participated in our 2021 People Matter Survey (PMS), 82% said there is a positive culture within the department in relation to employees of different genders and 73% believed gender was not a barrier to success at work. We are not complacent in achieving these great results and recognise there are pockets of DELWP that have opportunities for further improvement.

Throughout our work to drive equality we need to focus on shifting the dial when it comes to creating a truly inclusive workplace. As public servants, we also recognise the responsibility to care about issues affecting the wider communities we serve. As illustrated by the data above, gender equality is a pervasive issue and is a barrier for many Australians to achieving equality.

While we have made significant progress within DELWP, our employees have highlighted important areas for improvement, reflected in this gender equality action plan's (GEAP) 'Strategies and measures' section. Our PMS insights indicate that 3% of participants have reported experiencing sexual harassment and 4% experienced discrimination in 2021. We are committed to addressing identified hotspot areas.

Diversity and inclusion at DELWP

DELWP brings together Victoria's climate change response, biodiversity protection, resource recovery, water, energy, land management, planning and emergency management functions into a single department. DELWP understands and recognises that the best outcomes are achieved by fostering and valuing the diversity of our workforce and the communities in which we operate. We strive for a safe and respectful workplace for all staff and recognise the importance of gender equality in developing our programs, policies and services.

We realise the impact of continued gendered microaggressions, violence and inequities in the workplace on mental health and wellbeing. We embed a health, safety and wellbeing response to our long-term strategy to ensure DELWP remains a safe workplace where women from all backgrounds can thrive.

Building a positive organisational culture

To best serve Victorians, we strive to create a positive organisational culture built on:

- strong leadership
- diversity and belonging
- collaboration
- innovation
- developing our people.

Our vision

Our vision for diversity, inclusion and belonging is a workplace culture that embraces individual differences in all forms and fosters innovation. In creating meaningful and sustainable gender equality, our vision is clear.

- Gender equality is championed at every level of the department, removing barriers to equal opportunity and full participation.
- All DELWP employees actively contribute to creating a safe and respectful workplace, embracing individual viewpoints and contributions.
- DELWP's workforce mirrors the Victorian community and leads the way with gender equality in all we do.

Our guiding principles

We live our diversity and inclusion values when our people embrace the following principles:

- Connect effectively with our diverse customers and communities to understand their needs.
- Embrace different viewpoints.
- Have equal opportunity in the workplace.
- Feel they belong and know their unique contribution is valued.
- Leverage the experience and ideas of others.

DELWP's progress in gender equality

DELWP's Gender equality framework and action plan has been in place since 2015 and we continue to work towards challenging gender stereotypes, addressing power dynamics and removing barriers to gender equality.

In 2015 the department set a 50% target for a gender-balanced executive team, which was achieved in July 2016. Women currently make up 54% of the department's executive cohort (as of June 2021). Overall, the representation of women in the department has remained consistent at 48% for the past two years.

Gender pay gap analysis

DELWP monitors the gender pay gap annually. In the past two years, the department's gender pay gap has been under 1%. In June 2021 DELWP's gender pay gap was 0.4%. In 2019 DELWP set a 2% gender pay gap threshold and took action to investigate and close gender pay gaps at the branch and unit levels across the department. Through continuous data collection and review, we have a clear understanding of areas where challenges are presented and where to focus our efforts.

Safe and respectful workplaces

DELWP is also committed to preventing and responding to sexual harassment and violence against women. From findings of the Victorian Auditor-General's Audit into Sexual Harassment in the Victorian Public Service in 2019, the department adopted recommendations and implemented an action plan to address them. These actions have led to creating DELWP's Safe and respectful framework, focusing on key steps in response and prevention of inappropriate workplace behaviours and setting a clear outline of how staff can raise concerns and actively take action when they see inequality. In 2019 the department launched its Safe and Respectful Workplaces program, and more than 450 Safe and Respectful Workplace leaders have joined the program to promote equality and inclusion and to take an active role in making our workplaces free from everyday sexism and harassment. Active bystander training has also been delivered to 1,000 staff, which represents approximately 25% of the workforce.

Fire and emergency

In 2020 the department set a 30% target for the representation of women across all Forest, Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) deployments in the 2020–21 fire and emergency season. The percentage of women on deployment in the 2020–21 season was 22%. This was a 1% increase from the 2019–20 season. In the 2020–21 season, 34% of women were deployed in emergency support roles and 15% of women deployed in fire line roles. The department continues to focus its efforts to improve the representation of women on deployment and in leadership roles working across the FFMVic partnership.

Gender equality in 2021 and beyond

Our GEAP will seek to address the underlying and systemic barriers that contribute to gender inequality, discrimination, and poor behaviours. The plan will sustain a long-term and multi-dimensional focus on tackling and shifting these things. This approach is anchored by a focus on inclusion and belonging.

What we have achieved

In recent years, the department has:

- achieved an equal representation of women at executive levels since 2016
- established a commitment to gender pay equality with a 2% gender pay gap threshold and a gender pay gap analysis action plan
- launched our Safe and Respectful Workplaces program and made a commitment to preventing sexual harassment
- embedded all roles flex since 2016
- supported 26 women working in operational fire roles to participate in an accelerated leadership program and achieved a year-on-year increase of women on deployment in fire and emergency roles.

DELWP's commitment to the Gender Equality Act

On 25 February 2020 the *Gender Equality Act 2020* was enacted and commenced on 31 March 2021. The Act requires Victorian public sector organisations, local councils, and universities with 50 or more employees (defined entities) to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality including: considering and promoting gender equality in policies, programs and services; completing audits; developing action plans; and measuring and publishing progress reports.

DELWP has considered the gender equality principles set out in the *Gender Equality Act* in developing this GEAP.

These principles are that:

- All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.

- Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
- Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
- Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
- All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
- Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage based on sex and gender.
- Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

We also acknowledge the work set out in Safe and Strong: Victorian gender equality strategy as part of developing our plan.

Intersectional gender inequality

Intersectionality is a key principle of the *Gender Equality Act*. Section 6(8) of the Act outlines that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other protected attributes.

The department has considered intersectionality in all strategies and measures in developing this action plan. We understand that gender inequality can be compounded by individual identity, and we have ensured that the voices of those with lived experience of protected attributes have been heard throughout our consultation.

Diversity, inclusion and belonging have a strong presence within all areas of DELWP's key foundational strategies. Our plan complements organisational strategies and measures relating to Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and identity including:

- Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal self-determination reform strategy 2020 – 2025
- Aboriginal cultural safety framework and Aboriginal cultural capability framework
- Access and inclusion plan 2021 – 24
- Safe and respectful workplaces framework 2022
- Land Services and First Peoples group gender equality and disability action plan 2021 – 2025
- Place of pride LGBTIQ+ strategy and action plan.

FFMVic gender equality and inclusion


DELWP's Forest, Fire and Regions (FFR) group is actively addressing gender-based bias and challenging stereotypes in fire management roles. Through targeted projects and initiatives, FFR is working to greatly improve the presence of women in fire management roles and create a safe and respectful environment for women in the sector. This also extends to DELWP's partnerships in emergency with FFMVic. In 2022 all people leaders across DELWP's FFR division and the FFMVic partnership will attend Active Inclusion training, focusing on gender-based discrimination, ensuring the emergency management sector has leaders who are equipped to call out inequality in the workplace.

FFR continues to support gender equality through the Aboriginal Women in Fire Pathway Program, State Regional Women in Fire Coordinator Group program priorities and the Regional Diversity, Equality and Inclusion working groups. With this targeted approach, we will champion gender equality across the state, having a positive impact for the community in both metropolitan and regional areas.

Our employees with disability

Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018–2025 sets a target of increasing representation of those with disability from 6% of the Victorian public service (VPS) workforce by 2020 to 12% by 2025.

At DELWP, approximately 6% of our workforce shared that they have disability. We understand that gender inequality and disability exclusion can present multiple barriers to belonging. Our aim is to increase disability confidence in our organisation, along with creating a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace for our people to perform at their best and deliver the best outcomes for our community.



The 2020 PMS results indicated that the experience of employees with disability was less favourable, with only 16% of respondents revealing their requests for reasonable workplace adjustments were met, and a decrease in self-reported experiences of bullying from 25% to 16% between 2019 and 2021. We continue to track demographic and sentiment indicators relevant to people with disability against our Access and inclusion plan 2021–2024, which specifies 22 actions to increase the inclusion and wellbeing of people with disability in DELWP.

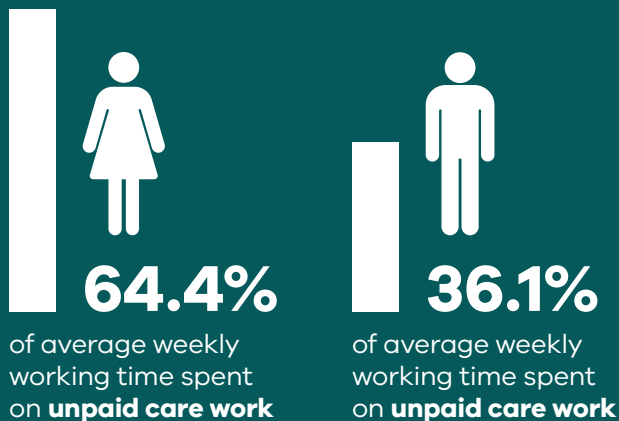
DELWP has recently renewed our Workplace adjustments policy and procedure, and many staff have responded by implementing these adjustments with their managers. This policy extends to staff with disability or chronic health conditions, and to carers. This change in scope is gender-responsive, noting that in Australian women are more likely to have multiple chronic health conditions than men, and that women are more likely to take a primary carer role for a person with disability.²

‘As a young woman with a chronic health condition, flexible work at DELWP has allowed me to manage my health and wellbeing more successfully than I ever have in the past.’

¹<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/men-women/female-health/contents/how-healthy/chronic-conditions>

²<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release#carers>

Gender Equality Statistics in Australia



Women spend 64.4 percent of their average weekly working time on unpaid care work compared to 36.1 percent for men

Women with disability and men with disability have different economic opportunities, with disabled women less likely to be in the paid workforce than disabled men



Disabled women **less likely** to be in the paid workforce than disabled men



Raising children accounts for a 17 percent loss in lifetime wages for women

For migrant and refugee women, underemployment is much higher



2.

Baseline results and analysis

DELWP's *Workplace Gender Audit 2021* gave the department strong baseline data and clearer insights into areas where we have seen successful gender equality strategies in action. It also allowed us to focus on areas in the department where we can improve.

Our gender composition across DELWP has remained consistent, with 48% of our total workforce identifying as women. We also have a gender balance with executive-level roles. The data showed a higher percentage of women at VPS grades 2 – 4 in, for example, junior clerical or administrative roles. There was also consistency with VPS grade 5 – 6 roles, with women making up an average of 48%. However, in certain divisions within DELWP, a gap for women in middle management roles was identified. We also found a lack of intersectional data and have addressed this through our strategies and measures for stronger data collection in future.

Women make up 54% of our Executive cohort, with a higher proportion of women in Corporate Services, Water and Catchments and Energy.

Women made up 81% of the part-time workforce across the department, and we recognise the need to further promote part-time and flexibility among men at DELWP, reducing the stigma of part-time negatively correlating with career progression.

DELWP is proud to have achieved an ambitious target of minimising the gender pay gap to 2% each year, less than the target of 5% suggested by the Gender Equality Commission. From our Workplace Gender Audit of 2021, the gap sat at 4% in favour of men.

We know from the 2021 PMS, the VPS Women of Colour Network Diversity and Inclusion Survey and employee consultation sessions, where you work within the department, your sexual orientation, gender identity and cultural background influences the experience you have. Again, these insights have shaped the measures and strategies within our GEAP.



3.

Meaningful consultation

Our gender equality journey at DELWP has been in progress for some time, and the department's policies, procedures, frameworks and programs reflect the commitment from previous GEAPs and what we want to achieve in the future. This plan has been developed by reviewing our current practices with a gender lens and through meaningful consultation with diverse cross-sections of employees from across the department. We have also consulted widely with other Victorian government departments and the Victorian Public Sector Commission to ensure a whole-of-Victorian-Government approach.

As part of DELWP's GEAP consultation, we formally engaged the following groups who provided extensive feedback throughout the various stages in development of the plan:

- DELWP Executive Board (formal endorsement from governing body)
- People and Culture Stewardship Committee (formal endorsement)
- Corporate services executive group (formal endorsement)
- People and Culture Leadership Group (formal endorsement)
- Forest Fire Regions Group Subcommittee (formal endorsement)
- Group culture and workforce managers
- Staff-led networks
- CPSU Union's Gender Equality Industrial Organiser
- Grace Papers representatives

The Equality Institute consultation sessions

DELWP facilitated a series of consultation workshops, highlighting key data from our Workplace Gender Audit and gender indicators from our PMS results. Consultation sessions were designed using a workshop approach whereby identified DELWP staff were invited to attend a 90-minute online session, consider gender audit data, and respond in small groups to key questions. Further consultation sessions were run to talk through the draft of the plan before finalisation, ensuring appropriate actions were considered and that our people's voices were captured.

Employees who participated in these sessions were from all levels of the department and represented a cross-section of cultural identities, gender identities and diverse lived experience. Throughout these sessions, intersectionality was a focus when discussing gender.

- Key insights and areas for improvement through actions in the GEAP identified through these sessions included:
- Available data lacks the capacity to consider the intersection between different identities and experiences as they relate to gender inequality.
- People with caring, cultural or family responsibilities, or with neurodiversity or other needs, are disadvantaged at DELWP by a culture of acceptance around significant workloads.

- Managers require additional HR support and training to be cognisant of the business case for gender equality and held to account.
- Disability is a barrier to promotion and meaningful work at DELWP because barriers and support options are not fully understood, visible or proactively addressed.
- DELWP's complaints and response system is not effective for all staff and there is a lack of trust in the system.
- Not all staff at DELWP can recognise disrespectful and harmful behaviours or feel comfortable acting on it.

Along with findings from The Equality Institute's consultation sessions and data from our Workforce Gender Audit, this plan was informed by:

- findings from the Victorian Public Sector Women of Colour Diversity and Inclusion Survey
- targeted 'Listen & Learn' sessions with staff from male-dominated areas of the department, led by DELWP's Secretary
- findings from the CPSU Safer Workplaces for Women of Colour Project
- employee consultation as part of developing the Safe and respectful workplaces framework.

4. Strategies and measures

Our approach

At DELWP, evidence-based strategies, sound data analysis and consultation from diverse stakeholder groups empower us to drive actionable impact we can measure.

We undertake thorough analysis through fact-finding exercises such as data audits, regular and systematic reviews, and extensive stakeholder consultations to capture lived experiences, ensuring we gather high-quality qualitative and quantitative evidence to rationalise our approach.

We have adopted a holistic and intersectional strategy lens – leveraging our policies, stakeholder consultations, People and Culture processes, subject matter experts and peer advocacy groups – to develop synergistic actions, streamline our One DELWP response to the GEAP, and deliver material and reasonable progress to gender equality.

Our GEAP is mapped to the seven indicators of workplace gender equality outlined in the *Gender Equality Act*. We aim to make reasonable and material progress in gender equality through the following 22 actions. We have outlined the data sources and best practice guides that have informed our rationale driving each indicator.

This GEAP focuses on a strong history within the department when it comes to gender equality. With our focus on driving us further and in new directions, it highlights DELWP's focus on:

- enhancing our commitment to safe and respectful workplaces
- moving beyond gender equality and accelerating intersectional representation
- deep-diving into targeted areas to make meaningful change.





GEAP: Our approach

Gender equality indicators

The GEAP is mapped to workplace gender equality indicators, as outlined in the Act:

1. Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
2. Gender composition of governing bodies
3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace
5. Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace
6. Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements supporting workers with family or caring responsibilities
7. Gendered segregation within the workplace



Overview of our actions

INDICATOR	KEY THEMES	ACTIONS
1. Gender composition of all levels of the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence leadership buy-in and mindset towards the business case for gender equality • Increase representation of women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds in leadership roles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure robust data collection and reporting measures on gender equality indicators 2. Drive a leadership reset through training and education 3. Elevate the representation of women in leadership roles
2. Gender composition of governing bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better gender balance in governing bodies, with increased participation of women from intersectional backgrounds 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Review DELWP governance frameworks to ensure women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds are contributing to departmental decision making
3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual pay gap audits that also measure equality across intersectional groups of women and types of employment • Increased transparency and embedding bias mitigation initiatives throughout key remuneration stages of the employee life cycle 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Undertake an annual gender pay gap audit 6. Apply an intersectional lens to data collection on pay equity 7. Implement bias checks and mitigations 8. Embed financial literacy training
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased education and understanding of appropriate workplace behaviour at all levels of the organisation • A person-centred process that is sensitive to intersectional nuances 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Review and enhance our safe and respectful workplaces Framework to provide a leading practice approach to prevention and a culturally sensitive response to sexual harassment and negative behaviours 10. Embed the safe and respectful workplaces learning package into induction and onboarding to promote appropriate workplace behaviours and expectations 11. Develop and implement safe and respectful and GEAP-related updates in DELWP's communication plan across all staff channels

INDICATOR	KEY THEMES	ACTIONS
5. Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased transparency, rigor, fairness and equitably in DELWP's recruitment policies and procedures Widen talent pools to recruit more diverse cohorts of talent into areas that lack intersectional gender representation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from DELWP's 2022 Recruitment Diversity and Inclusion Audit Review role design, recruitment, training and deployment systems in our emergency management functions to identify and remove barriers for women's participation and progression Promote DELWP as an employer of choice and leverage existing internal talent pipelines
6. Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements supporting workers with family or caring responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote positive role models and champions of work-life balance and flexible working Shift gender stereotypes and prejudices that adversely affect career progression for women working flexibly, part-time and/or with caring responsibilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase DELWP staff and leaders thriving through flexible working Enhance existing training on leading flexible teams to address bias and shift stereotypes Develop a multichannel campaign depicting men role modelling work-life integration Review DELWP's policies relating to leave, flexible working, cultural leave and family violence with a gendered lens
7. Gendered segregation within the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored training targeted at areas with highly gendered segregation Widen talent funnels from the community into the organisation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Build leadership capability to overcome mindsets perpetuating gender discrimination Increase the representation of women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds in our early career programs Develop a 'pipeline plan' to increase the number of women studying STEM subjects at secondary school and in surveying, spatial and valuing pathways Undertake regular deep-dive analyses into areas with the highest gender segregation to identify issues, prioritise meaningful action and track progress

Indicator 1

Gender composition at all levels of the workforce

'... Leadership needs to take responsibility for intersectional gender equality and not leave this task to the staff-led networks.'

'We have spoken about the need to go back to basics on the business case for gender equality. We make assumptions that it is Understood – perhaps this needs to be tested across delwp.'

ACTION	YEAR*	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 1: Ensure robust data collection and reporting measures on gender equality indicators Develop a data collection and reporting framework within existing corporate systems that complies with privacy requirements and staff preferences to measure our progress towards gender equality across intersectional groups of women	2022–23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger data collection and reporting measures are embedded into our corporate systems to enable continuous improvement and accountability to inform our gender equality actions and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DELWP's progress supporting gender equality is measured and embedded in group performance reporting and reports to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector while protecting privacy 	People and Culture
Action 2: Drive a leadership reset through training and education Design and deliver an immersive workshop focusing on progressing intersectional gender equality to executive teams	2022–23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift in mindsets around traditional masculine styles of leadership that perpetuate gender discrimination Stronger leadership buy-in to ensure GEAP success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement and visible championing of the GEAP 90% of our senior executive cohort have participated in the workshop Workshop participants report an increased understanding of the compounding impacts of intersectionality on gender equality PMS results indicate that staff are confident that their gender and intersectional attributes are not a barrier to succession and opportunities at DELWP 	People and Culture

*Financial year(s)

†Subject to further refinement

ACTION	YEAR*	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Action 3:</p> <p>Elevate the representation of women in leadership roles</p> <p>Establish a One DELWP focus on supporting and developing women to progress into leadership roles, with a emphasis on areas with high gender segregation, and on representation of women with intersectional attributes</p>	2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of existing programs into a coherent and complementary strategy to support women's progression in targeted areas • Accelerated pathways to leadership and development opportunities in to VPS 6 and above roles • Job shadowing and mentoring opportunities for high-performing women seeking professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender balance in senior executive roles is maintained through the life of the plan • 10% of women with intersectional attributes in senior leadership roles by 2025 • Increase in representation of women (including from intersectional backgrounds) in VPS 6 and above roles in focus areas with high gender segregation • Established Community of Practice for DELWP Women in Leadership 	People and Culture Groups

Indicator 2

Gender composition of governing bodies³

‘Move beyond seeing gender equality in governing bodies as “gender balance”.’

‘Consider who holds or claims positions of power in governing bodies.’

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 4: Review DELWP governance frameworks to ensure women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds are contributing to departmental decision making	2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DELWP’s internal governing bodies are more diverse, and gender balanced – driving better outcomes and informed decision making • Visible increase and participation of women from intersectional backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance framework and committee terms of reference updated to include guidance on gender composition • Increase in participation of women with intersectional attributes on DELWP governing bodies • Committee self-evaluation processes indicate that participants with intersectional attributes feel a sense of agency and empowerment in shaping decisions that affect them 	Executive Board

³ For the purposes of the GEAP, our governing bodies have been scoped as internal board only because DELWP recognises limitations in influencing external bodies and interdepartmental advisory committees.

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement



Indicator 3

Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender

'Increase transparency of decisions around progression tied to pay increments through performance appraisal data.'

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 5: Undertake an annual gender pay gap audit Continue annual gender pay gap audit to measure pay equality across tenures, length and type of employment contract at DELWP and inform appropriate actions	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings are used to ensure equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender Identify prevalence of any gender discrimination that impedes equal pay in staff hiring, promoting and developing practices and take appropriate measures to mitigate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 2% gender pay gap An annual report of gender pay equality that is shared with the organisation 	People and Culture
Action 6: Apply an intersectional lens to data collection on pay equity Adopt the new data collection and reporting framework to measure potential pay inequities across intersectional groups and women to address any pay disparities	2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved visibility of pay inequities that may be compounded by intersectional attributes such as LGBTQ+, age, women of colour, Aboriginality and disability Systemic issues are identified, and appropriate interventions are developed to mitigate gaps through actions outlined under Indicators 5 and 7 in this GEAP Women are rewarded fairly and equitably irrespective of race, age, ethnicity, disability and sexual or gender identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff-led networks and key subject matter experts are consulted in reviewing current remuneration policies and practices for discrimination and bias DELWP's baseline of pay equality across intersectional groups is measured and embedded in our GEAP group performance reporting while protecting privacy where required 	People and Culture

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement

ACTION	YEAR^	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 7: Implement bias checks and mitigations Design and implement the <i>Gender pay equality checklist</i> to mitigate bias at key remuneration stages of the employee life cycle	2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable and transparent remuneration decisions on commencement, annual performance appraisals, promotion and/or on return from leave • DELWP holds its people leaders accountable to reflect and address potential gender biases in their decision making and to recalibrate their approach to performance appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklist is embedded and consistently applied in DELWP's formal recruitment and performance appraisal processes • Pay gaps are resolved in accordance with an agreed departmental approach 	People and Culture
Action 8: Embed financial literacy training Engage our superannuation provider to deliver financial literacy training sessions targeted at women going through key life transitions	Biannually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased confidence for women navigating their financial future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual training sessions are delivered by DELWP's superannuation provider 	People and Culture

Indicator 4

Sexual harassment in the workplace

'Sexism and harassment are not understood. There is the problem of how little people know about it.'

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 9: Review and enhance our safe and respectful workplaces Framework to provide a leading practice approach to prevention, and a culturally sensitive response to sexual harassment and negative behaviours Framework to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy and response procedure • training and awareness to build capability and confidence • safe and respectful leadership • communication campaigns • risk management monitoring, reporting and evaluation 	2022–23 to 2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple and transparent people-centred reporting and resolution process in place • Increased confidence among staff in the new reporting process • Increased leadership capability to identify and respond to a broad spectrum of sexual harassment and negative gendered behaviours • Solutions are informed by staff-led networks and safety and wellbeing team • Increased confidence in DELWP and its leaders in providing fit-for-purpose and culturally safe support to survivors of sexual harassment and negative behaviours in the workplace • Increased capability and confidence in all staff to understand expectations of appropriate workplace behaviour, its impacts and departmental processes to address it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and respectful workplace behaviour policy and response procedure endorsed and launched by May 2022 • Report data on sexual harassment complaints embedded into safety reporting systems • Minimum 80% participation in safe and respectful workplaces learning initiatives by 2025 • Annual PMS shows a reduction in people reporting they have experienced sexual harassment • Annual PMS shows an increase in the percentage of employees who feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work • Annual PMS shows an increase in the percentage of employees who feel the organisation encourages respectful workplace behaviours 	People and Culture Groups

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement

ACTION	YEAR^	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 10: Embed the safe and respectful workplaces learning package into induction and onboarding to promote appropriate workplace behaviours and expectations Monitor and report on completion rates of safe and respectful workplaces learning activities	2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New starters at DELWP have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of safe and respectful workplace behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% attendance rate by DELWP staff by 2025 Feedback from induction surveys indicates a sound understanding of the safe and respectful workplace framework 	People and Culture Groups
Action 11: Develop and implement safe and respectful and GEAP-related updates in DELWP's communication plan across all staff channels	2022–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GEAP actions and activities are regularly promoted to employees on multiple platforms, enabling increased knowledge and awareness on gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual PMS data shows an increase in the percentage of staff who feel DELWP encourages respectful workplace behaviours Quarterly messages delivered across multiple channels reaffirming our commitment to minimise gendered violence and inappropriate behaviour at DELWP 	Digital and Customer Communications

Indicator 5

Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

'In recruitment practices at DELWP, "fairness and equality" go out the window in the race to get everything done urgently.'

'There are good policies in place; however, people doing recruitment circumvent these processes. They tap people on the shoulder and recruit "themselves" (meaning they recruit people that are like themselves).'

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 12: Implement recommendations from DELWP's 2022 Recruitment Diversity and Inclusion Audit Review and realign DELWP's current recruitment policies and procedures to respond to recommendations from DELWP's 2022 Recruitment Diversity and Inclusion Audit to identify and mitigate systemic barriers to equitable recruitment, retention and progression of women	2022–23 to 2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systemic issues that prevent fair and equitable recruitment, retention and progression of women are identified and appropriately addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual increase in the percentage of staff who feel that race, gender and/or identity, age and disability does not limit their career progression in DELWP's PMS results 	People and Culture

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement

ACTION	YEAR^	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 13: Review role design, recruitment, training and deployment systems in our emergency management functions to identify and remove barriers for women's participation and progression	2023–24 to 2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased rigour, structure and transparency about role selection, development and deployment Balance between technical and behavioural leadership skills reflected in how we describe and recruit to leadership positions There are more women in emergency management leadership roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to systems, processes and structures identified and implemented PDs for key leadership roles reflect leadership expectations and the balance of technical and behavioural leadership attributes Year-on-year increase in the number of women in emergency management leadership roles 	Forest, Fire and Regions People and Culture
Action 14: Promote DELWP as an employer of choice and leverage existing internal talent pipelines Actively promote DELWP as an employer of choice to a diverse cohort of talent in areas that lack intersectional gender representation	2022–23 to 2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DELWP website is revamped to promote our Employee Value Proposition and attract diverse, intersectional talent DELWP is viewed as a diverse and inclusive employer of choice for women jobseekers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline established to measure and increase the number of diverse women applying for DELWP roles Website updates made by June 2023 Recruitment data indicates an increase in the number of diverse women applying for DELWP positions 	People and Culture

Indicator 6

Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements supporting workers with family or caring responsibilities (leave and flexibility)

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 15: Showcase DELWP staff and leaders thriving through flexible working Develop and implement a digital communication campaign showcasing a diverse cohort of DELWP staff and leaders working flexibly to promote work-life integration.	2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women and carers DELWP reinforces its commitment to flexible working Myths about flexible working being career limiting are debunked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video successfully launched to all DELWP staff via Secretary's message Improved gender balance in the uptake of flexible work arrangements and part-time work Annual PMS data shows an increase in confidence and perceptions of DELWP's support of flexible work 	Digital and Customer Communications
Action 16: Enhance existing training on leading flexible teams to address bias and shift stereotypes Review existing learning programs relating to flexible and hybrid work to address bias, attitudes and beliefs that negatively correlate flexible working and leave to women's career progression	2023–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systemic barriers that impede flexible working are identified and addressed through a gender lens Women don't feel penalised with workloads or career limits for taking leave or working flexibly due to caring responsibilities Increased empathy and debunking of myths about balancing caring responsibilities with career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive training evaluation feedback 80% of people leaders have attended training Increased number of senior leaders working flexibly Increase in the number of men working flexibly Annual PMS data shows an increase in the number of staff who feel that flexible work is not a barrier for success at DELWP 	People and Culture

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement

‘We need men in management to normalise work-life balance so that other people can see leaders and managers leaving work on time to take care of their families. They will say “I can do this because I can see it happening”.’

‘Women who are not progressing are seen as having preferenced home-caring responsibilities. It is not seen as a departmental failure, it’s seen as a personal responsibility or choice.’

ACTION	YEAR^	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 17: Develop a multichannel campaign depicting men role modelling work-life integration	2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men working flexibly is normalised and visibly championed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently high levels of staff engagement with communication messages as evidenced by Google analytics, Secretary readership and staff forum attendance numbers 	Digital and Customer Communications
Action 18: Review DELWP’s policies relating to leave, flexible working, cultural leave and family violence with a gendered lens	2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our policies do not disadvantage women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds Staff feel more confident and supported that DELWP leave and flexible working policies reflect their individual needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of DELWP’s cultural leave and family violence policies have been reviewed to ensure gender equality 	People and Culture

Indicator 7

Gendered segregation within the workplace

'We need to focus on ensuring we have a pipeline of women (and using an intersectional lens) to the STEM profession. At DELWP this is areas including surveying, property valuing, science.'

ACTION	YEAR [^]	OUTCOME	MEASURE [†]	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 19: Build leadership capability to overcome mindsets perpetuating gender discrimination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and respectful workplaces framework is embedded into leadership training within identified hotspots with high gender segregation Deliver targeted training to FFR and FFMVic people leaders to mitigate unconscious bias and gender discrimination and lead more inclusively 	2021–22 to 2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders are equipped with the capability, confidence and tools to uncover bias in recruitment and progression processes to drive gender equality outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reduction in the percentage of staff who feel that race, gender and/or identity, age and disability is a barrier to success in DELWP's PMS results Program evaluation indicates increased capability and confidence in inclusive leadership and the practical applications of the learning in recruitment and progression processes 	People and Culture Forest, Fire and Regions Group
Action 20: Increase the representation of women from diverse and intersectional backgrounds in our early career programs DELWP's employment programs focus on young and emerging talent from marginalised background	2021–22 to 2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A talent funnel for bringing diverse young women into DELWP is established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% of women graduates and interns in DELWP's employment programs from intersectional backgrounds per yearly intake 	People and Culture

[^]Financial year(s)

[†]Subject to further refinement

ACTION	YEAR^	OUTCOME	MEASURE†	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 21: Develop a ‘pipeline plan’ to increase the number of women studying STEM subjects at secondary school and in surveying, spatial and valuing pathways	2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DELWP is perceived as an active champion of STEM careers for women and girls • Sector-wide agreement of key communications to encourage women/girls to pursue STEM careers • More women/girl participants in STEM courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector-endorsed communication materials are issued to all schools in Victoria • Campaign is developed and promoted across social media channels • Increase in the number of women/girls in STEM educational pathways • At least two STEM scholarships for women are awarded 	Land Use Victoria
Action 22: Undertake regular deep-dive analyses into areas with the highest gender segregation to identify issues, prioritise meaningful action and track progress Deep-dives may involve research, listening and learning, pulse checks and sector-wide analysis	2021–22 to 2024–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of the impacts of previous interventions and the current challenges and barriers to achieving gender equality goals • Collective agreement on the highest impact, highest priority interventions to pursue over the life of the GEAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022 FFMVic gender equity research report, with updated proposed actions, is delivered • Clear, targeted interventions are identified and tracked • Progress reports provided to the Executive Board on a six-monthly basis 	Forest, Fire and Regions People and Culture Groups

5.

Leadership, accountability, and resourcing

We understand the critical role that leadership plays in long-term sustainable success when it comes to gender equality. Through this plan, we set inclusive leadership as the cornerstone of everything we stand for, being bold in challenging and successfully overcoming the ways of thinking that limits equality in all its forms. DELWP has clear expectations of our people, but especially those in areas of leadership. This plan gives us another opportunity to stop and reflect and affirm our commitment to a safe and respectful workplace.

Our GEAP cannot work in isolation; we have ensured that DELWP's work on gender equality is aligned to all that we do – our One DELWP corporate plan, diversity and inclusion strategy and Pupangarli Marnmarnepu Aboriginal self-determination reform strategy.

To ensure the ongoing success of the plan, DELWP has resourced the Diversity and Inclusion team to oversee key activities for People and Culture. The Diversity and Inclusion team will also act as a chair for the Gender Equality Community of Practice group, which will be formed as part of our governance and reporting structure. This Community of Practice will comprise key employees across DELWP and will be responsible for driving key GEAP actions.

Message from the Secretary on safe and respectful workplaces

In 2020, and again in 2022, DELWP's Secretary John Bradley penned an open letter that highlighted clear expectations to all staff regarding appropriate workplace behaviours and a vision for creating a safe and respectful workplace. These letters reflect an ongoing commitment to equality and respect across DELWP⁴



⁴ Refer to the appendix to access the open letters from the Secretary.

6.

Measuring progress

: governance, reporting and accountability

The GEAP has a strong governance model, and progress towards its outcomes will be regularly reported to governance groups and contribute to accelerating meaningful change across the department, and in our community.

The GEAP and its implementation will be monitored continuously through our internal systems, with a Community of Practice convening to highlight and assess any potential risks to delivery.

The Diversity and Inclusion team will lead the coordination of this plan, with DELWP's Diversity and Inclusion manager overseeing its implementation in partnership with responsible leads.

The Gender Equality Community of Practice will meet quarterly to monitor implementation of the plan and to adjust priorities and actions as necessary. Any reviews and adjustments to the plan will be assessed by the Executive Board on a yearly basis, with a final evaluation of the plan completed at the end of year three.

MEASURE OF PROGRESS	RESPONSIBILITY
DELWP is committed to transparency and will ensure this plan is lodged with the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector	Director, Organisational Development
DELWP will provide meaningful and measurable outcomes on the progress of this plan in its annual report	People and Culture Stewardship Committee
Regularly monitor and review actions in the internal reporting system and collate information for reporting purposes	Manager, Diversity and Inclusion
Submit a progress report to the commission every two years	Director, Organisational Development

Communications and engagement

DELWP has built a strong foundation for communicating with our people, whether working in a metropolitan office or in the regions across Victoria. Our Strategic Communications team plays an important role in delivering consistent messaging around our commitment to gender equality and actions outlined in this plan.

We will also ensure that regular monitoring and evaluation of the GEAP will be conducted and communicated through our existing channels.

How can you contribute?

DELWP's GEAP provides the opportunity for us to work with our community to increase engagement and promote continuous improvement and innovations in gender equality. We welcome your feedback.

If you have feedback or suggestions about this plan, you can email us at diversity.inclusion@delwp.vic.gov.au

Appendix

- Attachment A – DELWP Workplace Gender Audit Data June 2021
- Attachment B – Open letter from Secretary on safe and respectful workplaces
- Attachment C – DELWP Safe and respectful workplaces framework

Sources

Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Australian Human Rights Commission

Diversity Council Australia and KPMG 'She's Price(d)less' report

The health of Australia's females

Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings