



wannonWATER

Gender Equality Action Plan

March 2022



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Message from the Managing Director



Equality is achieved when people can access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities - regardless of their unique identity.

Fully unlocking the value from an equitable workplace requires cultural and procedural change. Wannon Water understands the opportunity we have to work towards equality.

For a number of years, we have been implementing our Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan with a focus on gender diversity, Aboriginal inclusion and accessibility. This work has Wannon Water well positioned to meet the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, and we will continue to monitor and adjust our approach as we are committed to an outcome where inclusion, respect and equality is a business and cultural norm.

Gender equality is widely supported throughout our organisation with an Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and Network of Wannon Water Women (NOW) group that provide advice to the Executive Committee and People & Wellbeing Team.

We understand the significance of considering intersectionality in relation to gender equality and are continuing to improve our ability to capture insights in this area. To date we have focused on individual elements that might impact on intersectionality outcomes, including a Reconciliation Action Plan, a Financial Inclusion Action Plan for our customers, and an Accessibility Inclusion Plan.

Andrew Jeffers
Managing Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A-Je/L'.

Purpose and principles

The Wannon Water Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) will help progress, promote, and advocate for gender equality within our organisation. The benefits will extend beyond Wannon Water and support outcomes in our local communities and region.

Our People and Culture Policy Statement (Appendix 1) demonstrates Wannon Water's guiding principles, implementation mindset, and governance towards gender equality in relation to our employees, contractors, customers and community.

Our GEAP has been developed following the *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025 Guidance for Defined Entities* as issued by the Commissioner for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.



History of gender equality work

2015

- Take a Stand Training – upskilling employees to address poor behaviours and attitudes towards women
- Internal Gender Working Group formed

2016

- Our first gender audit resulted in our first Gender Diversity Action Plan
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy adopted, resulting in our first Inclusion and Diversity Plan
- Celebrations and awareness such as International Women’s Day
- A focus on flexible work practices and personal stories

2017

- Inclusion and Diversity Officer appointed
- Inclusion and Diversity Committee formed
- International Women’s Day promotional videos used internally and externally
- Review of recruitment practices
- Family Violence Procedure introduced following Royal Commission findings
- Greater analysis and use of People Matter Survey and cultural indicators
- Improved workforce data collection and reporting, including to Board
- Participated in Victorian Government Gender Auditing Working Group
- Participated in the Commission for Gender Equality Gender Auditing Pilot

2018

- Prevention of Family Violence Training
- Family Violence Contact Officers introduced
- Industry support and involvement

- Work 180 accreditation
- Annual Diversity Leadership Scholarships began
- Executive commitment to Respect 2040
- Business Professional Women’s South West network support and participation
- Wannon Water’s inaugural Financial Inclusion Action Plan launched
- Water industry e-learning Inclusion and Diversity themes rolled out

2019

- Inclusion and Diversity Plan broadened to support greater intersectionality
- Engagement session for part-time employees
- Participated in the Commission for Gender Equality Gender Auditing Pilot

2020

- Cultural performance measures introduced for all employees
- Internal Learning and Development Framework and High Potential Identification Framework introduced
- Board Observership programs began
- Matured our ability and focus on secondments to create opportunities not previously available
- Started to audit manager performance bias

2021

- Introduced PowerBI reporting model to support analysis of gender data
- Introduced a Community Leadership Program within the Learning and Development Framework

We have included relevant data from these sources in our audit analysis.

Wannon Water's aspirational targets

Our focus on gender since 2015 has resulted in regular reporting and engagement on gender and diversity through normal business practice and governance.

This understanding of Wannon Water's current state with regard to inclusion and diversity has resulted in the development of aspirational targets that have continued to evolve and help drive downstream actions.

By 2025, Wannon Water's overarching inclusion and diversity aspirational targets include:

- ▶ *My organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language - 95 per cent plus**
- ▶ *My manager treats employees with dignity and respect - 95 per cent plus**
- ▶ At least 40 per cent of females occupy positions that are responsible for managing teams, people or major projects
- ▶ The average annualised total remuneration (FTE adjusted) pay gap is reduced by 5 per cent.

** FOOTNOTE - Measure taken from annual People Matters survey undertaken by employees.*



Baseline audit analysis

Wannon Water has participated and contributed to public sector gender auditing pilots and related initiatives that were developed to help inform the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Other sources and data that have provided guidance as part of the development of this GEAP include:

- Victorian Public Sector People Matter Survey data
- Existing internal workforce and human resources data including:
 - > Recruitment
 - > Individual flexibility agreements and practices
 - > Learning and professional development statistics
 - > Performance criteria and scoring
 - > Inclusion and diversity initiatives and measures

- Insights and information received during the 2021 *Gender Equality Act* Audit
- Anecdotal feedback from employees during the required 2021 Gender Equality Action Plan consultation process, and
- Ongoing feedback from community and regional partnerships and industry networks.

When assessing data, all sensitive data is de-identified to protect privacy.

While Wannon Water’s strong history and culture of inclusion and diversity has supported elements of intersectionality, our ability to assess data for insights in this area is still maturing and will be woven into activities within our action plan.

Key results and insights following the audit are noted in the following tables. The data was current at 30 June 2021.

Workforce data		Employee experience data
1. Gender composition of the workforce	<p>Overall gender composition of the workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female – 36% ➤ Male – 64% ➤ Self-described – 0% <p>Overall gender composition of the workforce, by employment basis (full time, part time and casual):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time – 44 (58%) Part-time – 31 (42%) Casual – 0 ➤ Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time – 131 (96%) Part-time – 5 (4%) Casual – 0 	<p>Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with the following statement, by gender:</p> <p><i>There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees of different sexes/genders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female – 82% ➤ Male – 84%
	<p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We have a male dominated workforce. ➤ Part-time employees are predominantly female. ➤ We were unable to collect enough data to make any valuable insights in relation to intersectionality. ➤ There is a positive culture towards employees of different sexes/genders. 	



Workforce data		Employee experience data
2. Gender composition of the governing body	Gender composition of the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female – 4 ➤ Male – 4 	N/A
	Key insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We have a strong 50/50 representative of gender of our governing body ➤ Our Board members are appointed by the Minister for Water 	
3. Pay equity	Overall organisational gender pay gap as identified from the gender audit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Median base salary gap – 12.90% ➤ Median total remuneration gap – 18.90% 	➤ N/A
	Key insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is an overall pay gap within Wannon Water. ➤ The pay gaps identified highlight differences between types of roles and there being fewer women in senior roles in the organisation. 	
4. Sexual harassment	There were no formal sexual harassment complaints made in 2021/2022.	Percentage of survey respondents in the organisation who experienced sexual harassment, by gender (calculated by subtracting the percentage of survey respondents who selected <i>No, I have not experienced any of the above [sexual harassment] behaviour</i> from 100%) - 0%
		Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with the following statements, by gender: <p><i>I feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work</i> - 75%</p> <p>(Female – 76%, Male – 79%)</p> <p><i>My organisation takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination</i> - 80%</p> <p>(Female – 85%, Male – 82%)</p> <p><i>My organisation encourages respectful workplace behaviours</i> – 91%</p> <p>(Female – 91%, Male – 93%)</p> <p>Some employees have informally shared that they have experienced subtle sexism.</p>
Key insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wannon Water has an overall positive workplace culture that prioritises respect and takes steps to eliminate bullying harassment and discrimination. ➤ There remains some opportunity to further support our employees' ability to understand what appropriate and respectful behaviour in the workplace is, and to support employees to challenge inappropriate behaviour. 		



	Workforce data	Employee experience data
5. Recruitment and promotion	<p>Percentage of total female appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2017/18: 36% ➤ 2018/19: 40% ➤ 2019/20: 45% ➤ 2020/21: 47% <p>Percentage of total female higher duties (short-term promotions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2019/20: 34% (33% of workforce female) ➤ 2020/21: 23% (36% of workforce female) 	<p>Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with the following statements, by gender:</p> <p><i>My organisation makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit</i></p> <p>Female – 68%, Male – 66%</p> <p><i>I feel I have an equal chance at promotion in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 50%, Male – 55%</p> <p><i>Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 70%, Male – 82%</p> <p><i>Being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 79%, Male – 78%</p> <p><i>Cultural background is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 77%, Male – 78%</p> <p><i>Sexual orientation is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 77%, Male – 76%</p> <p><i>Disability is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female – 60%, Male – 58%</p> <p><i>Age is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i></p> <p>Female - 75%, Male – 71%</p>
	<p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An increased focus on gender considerations through the recruitment process has resulted in more balanced appointment outcomes. ➤ Female employees are under-represented in proportion to workforce composition in relation to opportunities for higher duties. ➤ There is a noticeable distinction between males and females when answering <i>Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation</i>. 	

	Workforce data	Employee experience data
6. Leave and flexibility	<p>Proportion of the workforce using formal flexible working arrangements: 36 (17%)</p> <p>Proportion of the workforce using formal flexible working arrangements, by gender: Female – 31 (15%), Male – 5 (2%)</p> <p>Composition of people in the organisation who have taken parental leave, by gender: Female – 6 (60%), Male – 4 (40%)</p> <p>Average number of paid parental leave weeks taken, by gender: Female 21.7, Male 2</p> <p>Composition of people who accessed carers leave, by gender: Female 34, Male – 58</p>	<p>Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with the following statements, by gender:</p> <p><i>My organisation would support me if I needed to take family violence leave</i> Female – 93%, Male – 83%</p> <p><i>I am confident that if I requested a flexible work arrangement, it would be given due consideration</i> Female – 86%, Male – 77%</p> <p><i>My organisation supports employees with family or other caring responsibilities, regardless of gender</i> Female – 89%, Male – 91%</p> <p>Some male employees have informally shared that the flexibility provided by Wannon Water has enabled their female partners to participate more fully in their own workplaces.</p>
	<p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A gender difference remains between those who are accessing formal flexible working arrangements. ➤ A gender difference remains between those who are accessing paid parental leave. ➤ Carer’s leave is accessed by both males and females. ➤ Providing flexible work for males is an important support for progressing gender equality in the wider community. 	

7. Gendered segregation	Workforce data	Employee experience data
	<p>Gender composition of ANZSCO code major groups in the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – Managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 7 (3%) ➤ Male 19 (9%) 2 – Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 33 (15%) ➤ Male 30 (14%) 3 – Technicians and trades workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 3 (1%) ➤ Male 19 (9%) 4 – Community and personal service workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 1 (0%) ➤ Male 1 (0%) 5 – Clerical and administrative workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 28 (13%) ➤ Male 11 (5%) 6 – Sales workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 0 (0%) ➤ Male 0 (0%) 7 – Machinery operators and drivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 3 (1%) ➤ Male 25 (11%) 8 – Labourers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Female 0 (0%) ➤ Male 31 (14%) 	N/A
	<p>Key insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There remains some disproportionate representation across most groups and work types within the organisation. 	

People Matter Survey

The 2021 People Matter Survey included a number of Gender Equality Act 2020 indicator questions. These provided valuable employee insights that could support development of the GEAP.

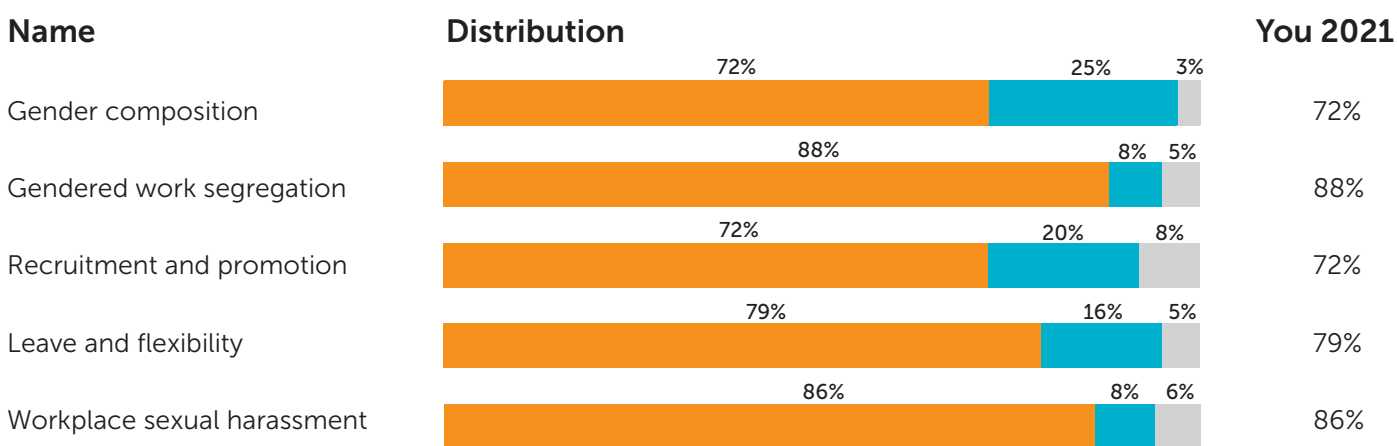
Wannon Water’s top-level results of each of these indicators resulted in the outcomes detailed in the graph below.

It shows that Wannon Water has a generally positive workplace towards Gender Equality however there

remain some larger proportions of our workforce who neither agree nor disagree with the stated questions around gender composition, recruitment and promotion and leave and flexibility.

Understanding what might be contributing to this will be considered as part of the GEAP strategies and measures under each of those indicators as we look to improve on these outcomes.

Gender Equality Act 2020 - Workplace gender equality indicators



Legend:

- Favourable responses are “agree” or “did not experience the negative behaviour e.g. for sexual harassment”
- Neutral responses are “neither agree nor disagree”, “don’t know”, or “unsure whether they experienced the negative behaviour”.
- Unfavourable responses are “disagree” or “experienced the negative behaviour”.



Consultation and engagement

Wannon Water's GEAP consultation began in June 2021 and continued through to submission of this GEAP in March 2022.

We have implemented and invited diverse and extensive consultation with all employees and key stakeholders. These included:

- Union representatives
- People Manager Program (participants: all team leaders and managers)
- Employee Consultative Committee (participants: employee representatives who includes Union delegates and members)
- Managing Director updates (participants: all employees)
- Employee drop-in session (participants: all employees)
- Inclusion and Diversity Committee (participants: employee inclusion and diversity employee representatives)
- Executive Committee (participants: Executives)
- Board Executive and Remuneration Committee (participants: Board Committee Members)
- Network of Wannon Water Women (participants: Wannon Water Women's Network)
- Board (participants: Board members)

The consultation included:

- Information on our history and progress to date on gender equality initiatives
- The *Gender Equality Act* and obligations
- The GEAP structure and requirements
- An overview of our current workforce and cultural data
- Results of the Gender Audit
- Our proposed approach to the GEAP.

At all engagements, employees were offered the opportunity to be more directly involved with developing the GEAP or provide feedback and ask questions.

Following an extensive and transparent engagement process, key stakeholders supported the proposed approach for this plan. Importantly, this process identified the need for ongoing engagement to refine specific activities and ways to achieve our GEAP's actions and outcomes.

Gender equality principles

Central to the development of this GEAP was a review of the principles in the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. This ensured our systems and actions reinforce those principles.

We identified that many of our existing frameworks and activities elevated these principles. This included our prioritisation of the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct and Public Sector values. Wannon Water's own values (next page) also supported these principles.

Our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (2020), recruitment practices, policies and procedures and recently developed performance criteria will continue to support gender equality principles.



Strategies and measures

Action	Measurement	Timeline	Action owner
1. Gender composition of all levels of the workforce			
Take up opportunities, internal and external to the organisation, that support projects that improve industry gender recruitment pipelines.	Improved gender representation of recruitment applicants and appointments	Ongoing	People & Business Services. Community & Corporate Services
Create an internal gender stakeholder communications and engagement plan.	Plan completed	Jan 2023	People & Business Services
2. Gender composition of governing bodies			
Gender composition of Wannon Water's governing body (our Board) is determined by The Minister for Water.			
3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender			
Undertake a salary benchmarking exercise prior to the development of the next Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA).	Completed report with recommendations for next EBA (2024)	Dec 2023	People & Business Services
Develop an annual gender audit process to be accessed as a management tool to support the implementation of strategies and measures in this plan.	System and approach confirmed July 2022	Dec 2022	People & Business Services
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace			
Develop a positive behaviours training program that incorporates sexual harassment, sexism, bias, showing respect, intersectionality and challenging inappropriate behaviours.	Number of staff who complete training - 95%	May 2024	People & Business Services
5. Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace			
Mature our Learning and Development Framework to include a formal program of mentoring, secondments, sponsorships, projects and higher duties that support gender and intersectionality outcomes.	Program launched	Jan 2024	People & Business Services
6. Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements, and working arrangements that support workers with family or caring responsibilities			
Monitor and report on use of family violence leave and flexible working arrangements (including caring) across all levels of the organisation by gender	Monitor and report annually	Annually starting 2023	People & Business Services
Review Individual Flexibility Working Arrangements to ensure best practice	Review undertaken	2023, 2025	People & Business Services
Review employee Family Violence Procedures to ensure best practice	Review undertaken	2024	People & Business Services
Promote and share success stories of all genders accessing flexibility and paid parental leave	Promoted every two years	2022, 2024, 2026	Corporate & Community Services

Action	Measurement	Timeline	Action owner
7. Gendered segregation within the workforce			
Undertake a gender impact assessment of role design	Completed impact assessment	June 2024	People & Business Services
Develop and implement specific strategies for improved gender balanced teams across the organisation where there was a significant gender difference	Review outcomes of specific implemented strategies	June 2024	All departments, led by People & Business Services
Other			
Deliver education and training for managers and senior employees in relation to conducting Gender Impact Assessments	Delivery of Gender Impact Assessment training to relevant employees	June 2023	Corporate & Community Services
Develop and implement individual performance measures for managers that help create opportunities for improved gender equality.	New performance measures are implemented	July 2023	People & Business Services
Where appropriate, integrate GEAP strategies and actions into work and branch plans across Wannon Water to ensure ongoing implementation and support for outcomes	Every branch plan has considered Gender Equality	March 2024	All senior managers



Leadership and resourcing

Our People and Culture Board Policy Statement demonstrates Wannon Water's leadership support for gender equality (Appendix 1).

Our existing Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan encompasses a broad internal governance structure, which will be accessed to support gender equality outcomes and this GEAP.

Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy intent (People and Culture Policy)
Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of GEAP and Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan
People & Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery of GEAP and Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan• Reporting• Resourcing
Inclusion and Diversity Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Input, contribution and feedback on implementation of the management plan

Our Diversity & Learning Officer will support the implementation of the GEAP across the organisation. This position was appointed in 2018 to support inclusion and diversity, and health and wellbeing initiatives.

GEAP actions will be built into work and branch management plans, engaging the broader workforce to help implement outcomes.

We encourage all employees to lead and participate in a range of inclusion and diversity activities, including

gender-related activities. This includes the Network of Wannon Water Women (NOW) group that works to promote gender equality throughout the organisation. The NOW group is a key stakeholder to refining and delivering on actions within the GEAP.

To support organisational-wide initiatives, existing employee performance criteria includes consideration of support and attendance at inclusion and diversity-related activities.

Measuring progress

We have an established Inclusion and Diversity Reporting Framework that will continue to support the measurement of progress.

1. Gender and inclusion and diversity progress reporting to the Executive and Board will consist of two annual reports:

- A gender-specific report that provides key management insights such as:
 - > Progress of relevant elements and actions under the GEAP
 - > Gender-related People Matter Survey insights
 - > Recruitment process and insights
 - > Performance bias and insights
 - > Workforce gender segregation and composition movements
 - > Total remuneration (pay gap) movements
 - > Flexibility practices.

- An Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan report that focuses on intersectionality such as:
 - > Reconciliation Action Plan update
 - > Accessibility Management Plan update
 - > Inclusion and diversity initiatives, and measurement framework
 - > Financial Inclusion Action Plan update

2. A six-monthly gender and inclusion and diversity progress report on the basis that it provides a customised update on the progress of inclusion and diversity, and gender-related activities. The report will include current relevant information and data available at the time.



References

Women's Health Atlas

<https://victorianwomenshealthatlas.net.au/#/> -
Accessed 9 August 2021

Glossary

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

Full-Time Equivalent

Gender Equality Action Plan

NOW

Appendices

People and Culture Policy Statement

Wannon Water Accessibility Action Plan

Wannon Water Reconciliation Action Plan