

Gender Equality Action Plan.





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Justice and Community Safety acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and waterways upon which our lives depend.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to ancestors of this country, Elders, knowledge holders and leaders – past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are steeped in culture and lore having existed within Australia continuously for some 65,000 years.

We acknowledge the ongoing leadership of Aboriginal communities across Victoria and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in striving to build on these strengths to address inequalities and improve Aboriginal justice outcomes.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are disproportionately affected by discrimination and that Aboriginal self-determination requires a systemic shift of power and control from government and non-Aboriginal services to Aboriginal communities and their organisations.

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Our commitment to gender equality

– Secretary's message

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and integral to the Department of Justice and Community Safety's (the department) vision for a justice and community safety system that works together to build a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria.

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.

The department has been working for many years towards gender equality in our workforce and with people who come into contact with our justice and community safety system. We have made important progress through targeted programs and reforms to address sexual harassment and promote safety within our workforce, including the Sexual Harassment Policy, Respect in the Workplace Policy, and Preventing Sexual Harassment e-Learn.

We have introduced ground-breaking legislation including the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021* and the *Equal Opportunity (Religious Exceptions) Amendment Act 2021* which have strengthened the protections for Victorians who experience discrimination and harm based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. We have undertaken legislative reform to decriminalise sex work in Victoria through the *Sex Work Decriminalisation Act 2022* which seeks to provide every worker in the industry with the same rights and access to entitlements and protections under law, as they would in any other job.

The department has expanded its role in providing specialist services for victim-survivors of family violence in response to key recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. This includes the establishment of the Fines Victoria Family Violence Scheme which withdraws infringement fines if family violence substantially contributed to the offence or where it is not safe to be named as the responsible person. Therapeutic interventions have also been made available for all women in prison who have experienced family violence.

The Victorian Government is committed to self-determination as the guiding principle in Aboriginal affairs, and the department will ensure that Aboriginal staff and communities are involved in our decision-making, program design and delivery for this work. We will also continue previous work to support Aboriginal women from having further contact with the criminal justice system including through the Koori Women's Diversion Program, which is delivered by community-led organisations and underpinned by self-determination.

The department has been actively involved in broader diversity and inclusion reform with a focus on intersectionality as we recognise the compounding nature of inequality. This includes work to address gaps and challenges within the justice system relating to Victoria's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which ensures people with disability have their needs appropriately met, particularly for those with complex support needs.

We welcome the introduction of the new *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*, which commenced on 31 March 2021. It is an important reform driver requiring the Victorian public sector, local councils and universities to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality. The department is an active leader in this space, not only meeting but exceeding our obligations, while also supporting our partner entities.

I am pleased to report that the department is performing well in the positive representation of women across all levels of our workforce with an overall figure of 54 per cent (as at 30 June 2021). We also have excellent representation in leadership positions with women comprising 60 per cent of our Board of Management, 60 per cent of our Executive Leadership Team and 56 per cent of our directors and managers. The department's Community Safety Building Authority even has a workforce profile of 62 per cent women, which is rare for the construction sector.

While this is positive, we recognise that there is still work to be done to ensure gender balance in specific areas within the department, such as operational focused work, particularly in correctional institutions and emergency management roles. We support the use of special

measures when they are necessary to achieve gender equality. We also need to continue working towards greater representation of people who have traditionally experienced discrimination and disadvantage in addition to gender, including people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Disability, Multicultural and Multifaith, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning (LGBTIQ+) communities.

To further advance gender and intersectional equality, we have developed a Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025. The Gender Equality Action Plan was developed through broad consultation where every staff member and the Community and Public Sector Union (Victoria) had opportunities to put forward their views and contribute to the overall design and content. The richness of the content is a testament to the positive interactions that we experienced, and I thank everyone who participated.

The feedback we received has helped us determine the key focus areas of the Gender Equality Action Plan, while the strategies and measures consider the connectedness between gender equality within our workforce and improved outcomes for people who come into contact with the justice and community

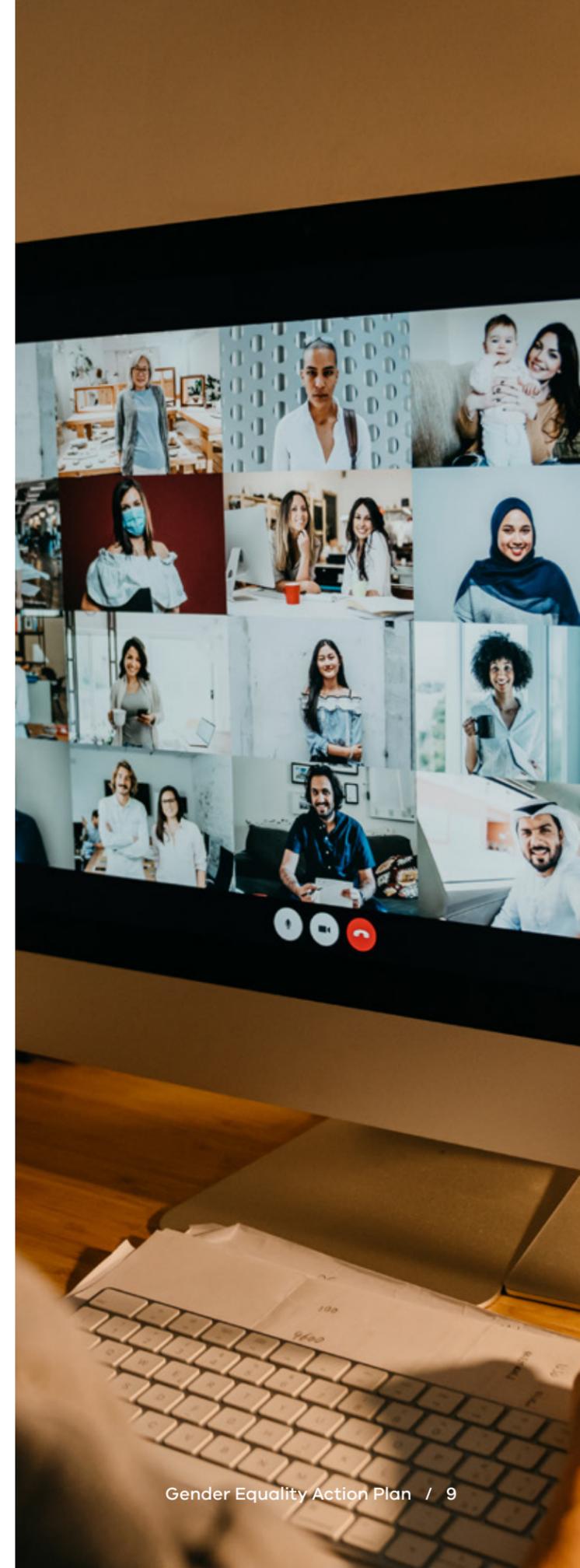
safety system. It is a living document, supported by strong governance and will be updated against evolving needs.

We are committed to continuing this work knowing that our efforts will result in positive outcomes for our staff, clients and community. It will also enable us to deliver on the wider Victorian Public Sector initiatives including *Safe and Strong – A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy, Free from Violence: Second Action Plan 2022–2025, State Disability Plan 2022–26* and *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022–2032* and the *Building Equality Policy*.

I encourage you to be part of this important reform by thinking about how you can make a difference in the work that you do. Please feel free to contact the Inclusion and Intersectionality team at inclusion&intersectionality@justice.vic.gov.au if you have any questions, and I look forward to keeping you informed of our progress.



Rebecca Falkingham
Secretary



Introduction

The vision of the department is for a justice and community safety system that works together to build a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria.



To support this vision, the department has developed a Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 (GEAP) to promote gender equality within our workforce and improve outcomes for people of all genders who come into contact with the justice system and its services.



The GEAP builds on significant work already undertaken by the department, including the introduction of policies and guidelines (including flexible work, family violence, sexual harassment, inclusive recruitment, and respect in the workplace); diversity, equity and inclusion training; workforce surveys related to diversity, inclusion, and health and wellbeing; culture reviews; and the reform and implementation of client services and programs designed to address gender inequity. These have resulted in positive outcomes for staff and clients and spearheaded momentum for change, that is furthered by our GEAP.

The department has enshrined self-determination in Aboriginal Justice Agreements, reflecting recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody which identified the empowerment of Aboriginal communities and the associated right to self-determination as critical to realising meaningful change in Aboriginal justice outcomes. This will be a guiding principle of the GEAP.

The strategies and measures outlined in this document are informed by key insights from a workplace gender audit conducted from June to September 2021 (which included quantitative and qualitative data) and extensive consultation with senior executives, staff, business areas, diversity and inclusion networks, and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU).

The GEAP fulfils departmental obligations as a defined entity under the Gender Equality Act and captures broader reform work to drive systemic change in building a more gender equitable justice and community safety system and workforce. It is a living document, supported by strong governance and will be updated to respond to evolving needs, thereby ensuring currency.

The GEAP includes key strategies and measures that:

- = improve data collection and analysis regarding staff and client experience of inequality to ensure evidence-based reform of systems, structures and practices
- = enhance departmental capability and capacity to foster a more accessible, equitable and inclusive environment for staff and clients
- = provide staff and clients, particularly those who experience systemic barriers to employment, with career development opportunities
- = build an organisational culture and justice and community safety system where people of all genders feel safe, respected, supported and valued.

Note on gender-inclusive language

Language is powerful in creating a safe and inclusive culture. It is important in signalling to people that they are welcomed and safe to be their full selves. Historically, words have been used to discriminate, exclude and harm people who do not adhere to dominant stereotypes and social norms. We recognise this experience and are using gender-inclusive language to ensure that we do not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity, or perpetuate gender stereotypes.

This document recognises that gender categories should never be limited to the male-female binary and must include trans and non-binary genders, and people who don't identify with any gender. Specific circumstances necessitate the use of binary language with the use of terms like men/women, such as responding to some of the obligations of the Gender Equality Act. However, where possible, we seek to challenge this and are inclusive of identities that do not fall within the binary frame.





Current landscape and policy context

What is gender equality and why do we need to consider intersectionality?

Gender is commonly understood as the socially constructed roles, behaviours and attributes that society considers appropriate for women and men. Roles or norms that are considered appropriate by society for women and men are socially learnt, differ among cultures and change over time. Gender is also hierarchical and often reflects unequal levels of power, producing social and economic inequalities.¹

Gender equality is a precondition to social justice and brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria. While advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community, this GEAP demonstrates the department's role in generating positive change, understanding that our actions will filter through to the community through our service delivery, and public leadership and role modelling in this space. We welcome the opportunity to be advocates and leaders who enhance gender equality in Victoria.

¹ World Health Organization. (2011). Gender mainstreaming for health managers: a practical approach. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

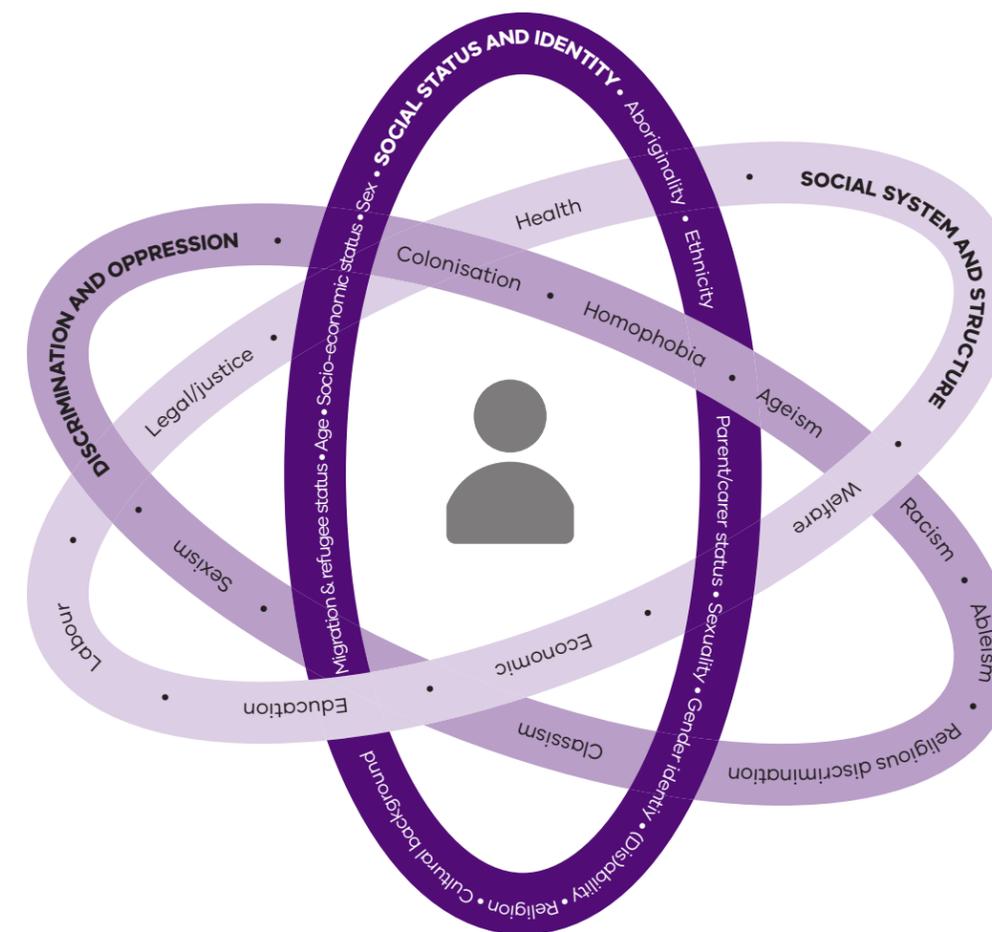
Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender as it means that everyone can enjoy the same rights, opportunities, responsibilities, and protections under the law. Women and gender diverse people have historically, and disproportionately, experienced discrimination and disadvantage based on sex and gender. Their experiences have also been shaped by other forms of inequality, such as racism, ableism, homophobia or ageism, to name a few. Every person 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.

Intersectionality is an approach that seeks to understand how social meanings about different people and groups of people underpin experiences of discrimination, disadvantage and inequality. These experiences can overlap (or 'intersect') when an individual experiences more than one form of inequality, associated with a range of different identities or attributes they may have.

For example, a woman with disability who works from home as part of a workplace adjustments agreement may be overlooked for promotion or leadership opportunities due to outdated ideas that managers and leaders need to be physically present in an office space or at meetings to be effective. Intersectionality considers people's unique experiences of inequality and discrimination.

It is critical that we consider gender equality from an intersectional perspective (as illustrated in Figure 1) to help us understand how systems and structures interact to create multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage. The Gender Equality Act identifies intersectionality as a principle for organisations to consider when developing strategies and measures to promote gender equality. The GEAP embodies this approach, thereby ensuring that our collective action resolves multiple forms of inequity experienced by our staff and clients.

Figure 1
Understanding intersectionality²



² Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE), 'Ending violence against women and girls: Evaluating a decade of Australia's development assistance', Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 2019.



Legislative context

The *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* contains 20 basic rights that promote and protect the values of freedom, respect, equality, and dignity.

The commencement of the Gender Equality Act has provided further opportunity to increase gender equality and primary prevention work. It is anticipated to drive major improvements in workplace gender equality in Victorian public sector entities, universities and local councils by ensuring defined entities comply with the following obligations:

- = Complete a gender audit by 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2025 and submit this to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (the Commission) via a reporting platform
- = Submit a GEAP to the Commission by 31 March 2022 and 31 October 2025
- = Submit a progress report to the Commission by 31 October 2023, 31 October 2025, and 31 October 2027
- = Undertake gender impact assessments (GIA) (ongoing).

Strategic alignment

Victoria is a leader in gender equality reform spearheading transformative changes, many stemming from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, including passing of the Gender Equality Act. The department is committed to family violence reform, and we recognise that gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and their children. The GEAP will play a role in this work. It was also developed to align with key government strategies related to gender including: *Safe and Strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy*, *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women 2017-2027*, *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-2023*, and the *Building Equality Policy*.

The GEAP has also been developed in the context of relevant departmental strategies and plans, enabling strategies to contribute to the delivery of justice and community safety priorities across portfolio areas.

The GEAP is also connected to important transformation work being undertaken in the construction sector regarding the development and piloting of a Construction Industry Culture Standard. The Culture Standard stems from collaboration across the Victorian and New South Wales public sectors, the Australian Constructors Association and leaders from industry and academia. It aims to lift productivity and performance and address major issues impacting the industry and its workforce, including excessive work hours and fatigue, poor mental health, and failure to attract and retain a diverse workforce.

Appendix A provides a snapshot of the key national, state and departmental strategies used to shape the GEAP.

What we know about gender equality in the department



About the department

The department is committed to improving community safety, victim services, regulatory services and crime prevention. Our scope of responsibilities includes service delivery and improvement, along with the development and implementation of laws, regulations and policy. Our work focuses on ensuring that the justice and community safety system works efficiently and effectively.

The department partners with a broad network of statutory authorities, portfolio agencies, judicial and quasi-judicial bodies to support delivery of its work. As these are classified as separate defined entities under the Gender Equality Act, they are not included in data analysis, strategies or measures contained in the GEAP. We are coordinating and collaborating with our partners to manage interdependencies and foster mutual success.



Data Collection and Analysis: completing a workplace gender audit

The department completed a workplace gender audit based on data as at 30 June 2021. Workforce and employee experience data was collected from payroll and HR systems, the People Matter Survey (PMS) 2021, the Diversity and Inclusion Pulse Survey 2021 and the Workplace Equality and Respect Self-Assessment 2020, to identify critical gaps and assess change required to advance gender equality.

The PMS included questions developed in consultation with the Commission to deliver data to meet Gender Equality Act reporting obligations. The department's survey response rate was 25 per cent which met the Commission's recommended threshold.

The audit collected data on the following gender equality indicators:

- = Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
- = Gender composition of governing bodies
- = Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
- = Sexual harassment
- = Recruitment and promotion practices
- = Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements for those with family or caring responsibilities
- = Gendered segregation within the workplace.

Key findings from the workplace gender audit



10,698

total workforce

Women	54%	Men	46%
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*10 staff (0.1%) identify as another gender identity

Data: DJCS workforce composition by gender as at 30 June 2021

Gender composition of governing body

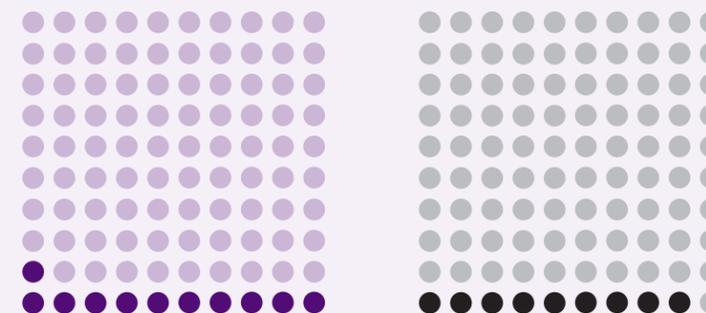


9 women 6 men

*excludes statutory appointments

Data: DJCS Board of Management as at 30 June 2021

Sexual harassment



11% of women
and **9% of men**
reported experiencing
sexual harassment
behaviours at work.

Data: Gender breakdown of the percentage of DJCS staff who participated in the 2021 People Matter Survey who reported experiencing sexual harassment in the previous 12 months

Recruitment and promotion practices



2,081

people recruited to DJCS



563

staff received permanent promotions



10,116

staff participated in career development training



Data: Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021



4,077

staff were awarded higher duties



1,190

staff were awarded internal secondments



1,409

staff exited the department



Data: Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021

The following provides a snapshot of key findings from the workplace gender audit with a more detailed report available at Appendix B.

- = The department's workforce comprised 10,698 staff, with a larger proportion of staff who identify as women at 54.3 per cent compared with 45.6 per cent who identify as men and 0.1 per cent who identify with another gender identity.
- = Women comprise a greater proportion of the department's workforce at all levels, from senior executive to VPS levels. The department's Board of Management contains a significant number of women (nine women compared with six men).
- = The majority (88.2 per cent) of staff are employed on a full-time basis across the department at various levels. A small proportion (8.4 per cent) engage in part-time work and most people who work part-time are women, 89 per cent women compared with 11 per cent men.

- = The majority (85.5 per cent) of staff are employed on a permanent/ ongoing basis across the department at various levels. A small proportion (11.1 per cent) are employed on contracts (59.5 per cent are women, compared to 40.3 per cent men). Only 3.5 per cent are employed on a casual basis, with gender ratios of 51.1 per cent women and 48.9 per cent men.
- = The overall gender pay gap³ at the department is relatively low at 2.5 per cent. However, it does vary when examining like-for-like positions within the department.
- = Of all formal sexual harassment reports (73 in total), women represented 87.7 per cent of complaints compared with 12.3 per cent made by men. PMS data indicates that there is underreporting of formal sexual harassment incidents.
- = Women experienced increased opportunities for promotion and career development (including training, secondments and acting arrangements). This included increased promotion at the senior executive and manager levels.

³ Based on median full-time equivalent total remuneration, including leave loading, as required under the Gender Equality Act obligations the gap between men and women was 2.5 per cent, while annualised base salary analysis resulted in a favourable outcome for women at -3.1 per cent.



Data gaps

We recognise that the audit data only provides part of the picture and high-level findings do not reflect gender segregation experienced in some of our workplaces, particularly those in operational settings such as corrections facilities. Further analysis is being undertaken to identify specific reform required within gender segregated workplaces.

The findings are also limited as comprehensive and reliable intersectional data is not currently available in the department. This means that we are unable to provide an accurate workplace profile of women with intersecting identities related to disability, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage to understand additional barriers to equality. A key action in the GEAP is to work on data collection to enable a better understanding and track progress in future audits.





Meaningful consultation and engagement

Consultation approach

We value engagement as it provides opportunities to enrich our work through gathering additional insights to the gender audit, giving voice to people affected by change, and building relationships to support and lead reform.

The department's consultation occurred in two phases:

1. Gathering insights in response to the workplace gender audit and shaping the vision for gender equality in the department
2. Sharing the draft GEAP for feedback and input.

During July to September 2021, the Inclusion and Intersectionality branch undertook Phase One consultation. A broad range of people were engaged from across the department, as well as representatives from departmental diversity and inclusion networks and the Victorian branch of the CPSU, to share findings from our first workplace gender audit. Visual representations of the high-level findings were used to guide feedback. Engagement mechanisms included online workshops, business unit meetings, an anonymous online survey, email correspondence, and individual phone and videoconferencing sessions.



From November 2021 to January 2022, Phase Two consultation tested proposed focus areas, strategies, measures and milestones, and the draft case for change. Again, staff from across the department, and representatives of diversity and inclusion networks and the CPSU provided feedback and input on the draft GEAP. A detailed outline of proposed strategies, measures, milestones and resources, and visual representations of priority focus areas, were used to guide consultation and obtain constructive input and feedback. Engagement mechanisms included an environmental scan, online workshops, anonymous online polling, email correspondence, and individual phone and videoconferencing sessions.

Providing accessible and inclusive participation options allowed more people to engage in the consultation process which captured a greater diversity of perspectives. This included the provision of access and technology options, as well as catering for a 24/7 workforce.

Diversity and inclusion networks were specifically engaged to enable building intersectionality into the GEAP.

We are committed to ongoing engagement to ensure effective, sustainable, and long-term cultural change. This is supported by our governance model (see page 87) and an engagement plan.

Who was involved?

Consultation was designed to enable meaningful engagement with a broad range of people, empowering them to share information in a safe and supported way. Engagement was available to all staff with targeted activities for senior executives, Gender Equality Working Group, Gender Equality Steering Committee, diversity and inclusion networks, and the CPSU.

During Phase One, over 100 staff were directly engaged from a broad cross section of work areas and roles. 65 staff (54 women and 11 men) participated in four consultation sessions. This included dedicated sessions with the Gender Equality Working Group and Gender Equality Steering Committee, as well as the DJCS Enablers Network. 50 staff (36 women, seven men and seven prefer not to say) were engaged through a short anonymous online survey. There was also strong engagement from executive staff, including Deputy Secretaries and Executive Directors, who participated in targeted consultation for senior leadership. Further, CPSU Industrial Officers were consulted and provided written feedback on potential strategies for inclusion in the GEAP.

During Phase Two consultation, again over 100 staff were directly engaged, with 71 per cent of staff participating in both phases of consultation. A total of 49 staff (36 women and 13 men) participated in six consultation sessions, including dedicated sessions with the Gender Equality Working Group and Gender Equality Steering Committee, and the DJCS Enablers Network. An additional session with CPSU representatives was also held during Phase Two. Strong engagement with executive staff continued with individual one-on-one meetings with Deputy Secretaries and their key staff to obtain feedback on the draft GEAP and case for change.

Business units were engaged to complete an environmental scan of existing strategies and measures to include in the GEAP, to review proposed inclusions related to their areas and identify strategic resourcing requirements for the strategic resource plan.

Comprehensive and targeted engagement resulted in robust information to inform the GEAP, and has created a network of supporters who have a strong commitment and a willingness to be involved in future consultation, as well as advocates for the GEAP within their areas.



What we heard

"[The audit] doesn't tell us the racial/cultural background of the women/men, especially in leadership roles, and we know that there is huge intersection between cultural identity and leadership opportunities."

– Workshop participant

Phase One

During Phase One, people positively received the high-level workplace audit findings, particularly regarding the representation of women in leadership.

However, it was noted that whole-of-department level data does not provide a nuanced picture of what is happening at a local or individual level. We heard that across all groups within the department there is considerable variability in experiences related to career development, pathways to leadership and flexible work arrangements, which are often dependent on a person's role and business unit culture. As such, people expressed a desire for more detailed data and analysis to reflect the varied work groups, work types and roles. It was felt that capturing people's stories through more qualitative engagement was also critical in understanding the state of gender equality within the department.

There was also a desire for more intersectional data, particularly for Aboriginal, multicultural and multifaith staff, and staff with disability, to better understand how both gender inequality and intersectionality from a data perspective (or analysis).

Participants also called out the need to collect more experiential data on recruitment, leave and promotional practices. Suggestions included reviewing recruitment policies and practices; reviewing the use of exit interviews; interviewing men, women and gender diverse people returning from parental/family violence leave; and analysing the PMS data through an intersectional lens.

It was suggested that stories shared by staff could be used to develop a campaign highlighting the different ways that our workforces can access flexible work and leave. It was thought that this could drive a people-centred approach and reach staff across the department in an engaging way.

Managers were identified as a key group that needed upskilling in supporting flexible work and promoting its benefits. There was recognition that more training is required to equip managers to have positive conversations about flexibility as it directly impacts on equality in the workplace.

Safety within the workplace was another key issue discussed by participants. There was recognition that a focus on preventing misconduct was needed, and that further work was required to address workplace sexual harassment. There was also acknowledgement that an increase in reports of sexual harassment can be positive when it reflects an increase in staff knowledge of reporting protocols and trust that appropriate action will be taken.

"The department sets the expectations of gender equality very well. This is evident by the large proportion of women at the executive levels. They also set the expectations through communications and education."

– Survey participant

“Upskill managers to know how to respond to gender inequality in the workplace.”

– Workshop participant

“Transparency of information to keep people accountable.”

– Workshop participant

It was suggested that under-reporting is likely due to fear of reprisal associated with formally reporting sexual harassment, which reflected PMS findings. There were suggestions to consider anonymous reporting and create a targeted action plan for the prevention and management of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Finally, people acknowledged that gender inequalities impact everyone and that men need to do more to enable and lead

effective change. It was noted that women are more likely than men to take part in gender equality advocacy, training and consultations. During this consultation phase, far more women participated than men. It was suggested that targeted strategies to ensure men’s participation were essential and would benefit men too. Men also spoke about feeling unsafe in some workplaces due to negative attitudes and behaviours present in gender segregated cultures.

“Acknowledge the gender roles of Aboriginal women as different to Aboriginal men and in difference to mainstream gender equality.”

– Workshop participant

“Introduce anonymous reporting avenues for sexual harassment.”

– Workshop participant

“Data collection on race/culture/sexuality/age to further add to quality of data [regarding] intersectionality and gender – it’s really important to explain & inform staff why this [is needed].”

– Workshop participant

Phase Two

During Phase Two consultation, overall people stressed the need for key evidence-based strategic initiatives to drive transformative change, rather than an exhaustive list of actions that are unattainable and/or inadequately resourced.

We heard that different areas across the department are at different stages of understanding and embedding gender equality and intersectionality into their practice. A targeted approach is critical to ensure that efforts align with various stages of maturity. Intersectionality was also considered fundamental to the GEAP, enabling holistic and robust change.

Data was highlighted as vital to ensuring we implement evidence-based strategies and to track progress. It was stressed that we need to improve how we collect and use intersectional data to inform decision-making, policy development and service delivery.

“To build this into our DNA, we need to build gender and intersectional approaches into our processes.”

– Executive staff member

Ensuring pathways for women who traditionally experience systemic barriers to leadership and career development, particularly women from Aboriginal, multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, and women with disability was a key concern. It was felt that we need more diverse representation of women within senior management and executive roles.

We heard that there is a need for improved guidance and support for managers and executives around recruiting women and people from diverse backgrounds, not only for employment within the department, but appointments to boards, committees and working groups.

People also turned their minds to how we can bring others along and manage resistance and backlash. It was identified that an important first step in engaging people was promoting gender equality as beneficial for everyone. It was highlighted that men needed to take a far more active role in reform, working alongside and collaboratively with people with lived and living experience.

We also heard that we need to mainstream changes and take advantage of opportunities as they arise, including the development of the new People Strategy and work coming out of the Cultural Review of the Adult Correctional System.

Overall, people stressed the importance of commitment, transparency, and accountability to enable authentic leadership and cultural change.

“Don’t make a shopping list of things to do. Have significant things/targets that matter.”

– Executive staff member



“[We need] diverse representation of women of colour (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) in senior management and executive level.”

– Workshop participant

“Include an action about improving guidance and support for recruiting women and people from diverse backgrounds to be appointed to boards, committees and working groups.”

– Executive staff member





Case for change

In Australia, the case for change for gender equality has been evolving for over a century with the majority of women's rights activism taking place from the 1960s, including lifting the marriage bar in the Commonwealth public service (which required women to give up their jobs once they married). Gender equality is not a new concept and while significant advances have been made there's still important work to be done. Gender still plays a driving role in people experiencing discrimination and disadvantage, and the steady popularisation of intersectionality from 1989 has provided a new, more holistic approach to driving this critical reform.

Our case for change builds on this history of reform. It is shaped by the voices of our departmental staff and CPSU representatives who shared accounts of their experiences, as well as their vision for a future where gender equality is realised in the department. This information was collected through the workplace gender audit and consultations.





Our vision for gender equality

'Gender equality is a fundamental human right essential to the health of our workplace culture, and our justice and community safety system.'





We will consider gender equality in an intersectional way to ensure holistic reform addresses multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage. This approach respectfully recognises the complex and individual experiences of staff and clients.

We will build a safer and more inclusive workplace where we respect each other, act with integrity, and support people to work to the best of their abilities and achieve their professional goals.

We will ensure people who come into contact with the justice and community safety system are afforded equal rights and treated with dignity and respect.

A department built on equality enables us to provide a justice and community safety system that delivers a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria, for all Victorians.

Barriers

We recognise that there are structural, cultural, and social barriers that underpin people's experience of discrimination and disadvantage. These play out in our workplace and service delivery, posing barriers for people's full and equal participation. Our GEAP recognises the interdependency between positive workplace culture and client experience, which is why we have combined our workplace and service delivery reforms.

Some of our work areas and settings experience unique barriers to advancing gender equality due to workplace cultures where there is limited ability and sometimes open resistance to accommodate gender equality reforms, such as flexible working arrangements.

This is often experienced in client facing and operational settings. As women still predominantly undertake more care and domestic duties than men, flexibility is critical to their full participation in work. In settings where the provision of flexibility is a barrier, we experience negative impacts on diversifying the workforce to better reflect the community, fail to capitalise on attracting the best candidates from the largest talent pool, and are unable to effectively support career progression or provide leadership opportunities for people of all genders.

The GEAP is designed to address known barriers and prioritises action to address areas of greatest need. We will regularly assess currency and progress through a strong governance framework overseeing implementation, monitoring and reporting.



Call to action

We are committed to understanding how gender inequality plays out in our organisation, the justice system and its services. We will build our knowledge through gathering strong data and listening to the stories behind the data to get a more fulsome picture of what's happening within our department and across its various settings.

We will prioritise organisational safety to create a working environment where our staff and clients feel safe to fully express themselves, and do not feel harassed or discriminated against. Psychosocial and physical safety will be valued equally. We will support staff to be positive bystanders and strengthen mechanisms for support and reporting. We will also seek improvements to creating a culture where work-life balance is valued as it has a direct impact on people's performance, as well as their sense of health and wellbeing.

"Justice has very varied workforces – aggregated data [is] not really telling us what's happening within each area."

– Staff member

We will dedicate the required time, resources and effort to build a coordinated and strategic approach to embedding gender equality across the organisation. This will be underpinned by strong governance structures to ensure effective implementation of strategies and initiatives across the department.

We will consider gender inequality from an intersectional perspective, thereby addressing compounding forms of inequality that shape the experiences of staff and clients. This will involve building staff capability to promote gender equality and intersectionality across policy, operations, service delivery and business functions.

We recognise that people who are most impacted by discrimination and disadvantage are already leaders in advocating for diversity, inclusion and equality in the department. As a collective, we will work together to achieve the transformative change to which we aspire. We also seek to achieve intersectional representation of people with lived and living experience at all levels, as a key action to promote equality.

We will be transparent about the progress of the strategies we are implementing and will provide genuine opportunities for people to engage with us on this work. We will critically reflect on our progress and seek out opportunities for continuous improvement.

We will hold ourselves and each other to account, acting consistently across all areas within the department to

"Making sure that staff are safe and supported when they challenge the status quo."

– Staff member

demonstrate our commitment to equality and in accordance with our obligations and aspirations for growth.

We understand that this work is complex, challenging, and sensitive, and recognise that we may experience resistance to change. We will seek to understand and manage resistance safely, and foster a collective response to eliminate inequality.

We are committed to implementing this GEAP to create sustainable change over time, and will be active leaders within the department, justice sector and broader community. Leadership extends beyond formal job roles to the actions of each person in the department. Everyone has the power to make the experiences of those around them positive, and as public servants we have agreed to uphold public sector values of responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights. The GEAP embodies these values and by working together we will contribute to improving the lives of those who work within the department, people who come into contact with the department and the broader community.

“It is important to ensure current staff networks such as Pride Network, Women of Colour Network and Enablers Network are supported as leaders.”

– Staff member from
Gender Equality Working Group





Focus areas

Our focus areas

The department's strategies, measures and milestones are structured into four focus areas which have been informed by key insights from research and consultations.

The strategies build on current or planned initiatives across the department and are designed to be phased and mutually reinforcing, recognising that multiple strategies and a long-term approach is required to achieve positive outcomes.

Measures are designed to assist the department to monitor our strategies to ensure we are on the right track to achieve our vision for an inclusive workplace underpinned by principles of gender equality.

The diagram on the next page provides a high-level overview of the GEAP.

A detailed outline of strategies, measures and milestones under each focus area will follow.



Focus area 1
Improving data on gender and intersectionality



Focus area 2
Building capability and capacity related to equality



Focus area 3
Equitable pathways to career development and leadership



Focus area 4
Creating a safer, empowering and inclusive culture

Gender Equality Action Plan



Vision Gender equality is a fundamental human right essential to the health of our workplace culture, and our justice and community safety system



Focus areas

1. Improving data on gender and intersectionality
2. Building capability and capacity related to equality
3. Equitable pathways to career development and leadership
4. Creating a safer, empowering and inclusive culture



Flagship strategies

1. Develop a departmental Data Improvement Plan
2. Participate in annual People Matter Survey and analyse data against the gender equality indicators
3. Conduct a workplace gender audit
4. Develop a departmental Intersectionality Strategy
5. Develop a departmental Gender Equality Policy
6. Develop and deliver Gender Impact Assessment training
7. Deliver training related to equity including:
 - Sexual Harassment Prevention training
 - Respect in the Workplace training
 - Foundational Family Violence Training
8. Develop a communications strategy to increase awareness and understanding of gender equality
9. An intersectional approach is used to develop the departmental People Strategy and its pillars
10. Develop a Flexible Working Strategy
11. Identify pay gaps and targeted strategies to address factors that contribute to gender pay gaps
12. Deliver the Cultural Review of the Adult Correctional Services
13. Develop multi-agency process to prevent and respond to bullying, and sexual harassment



What success will look like

1. Improved data collection and analysis to better inform policies, programs, services, and workforce strategies.
2. Empowering staff and clients to understand how equality can improve people's lives in the workplace, at home and in society.
3. Improving diverse representation of women in leadership and equity for career development, remuneration, leave and flexibility.
4. To provide environments where staff and clients feel safe, respected, supported and valued.



Key principles Lived and living experience ~ Intersectionality ~ Self-determination ~ Human Rights

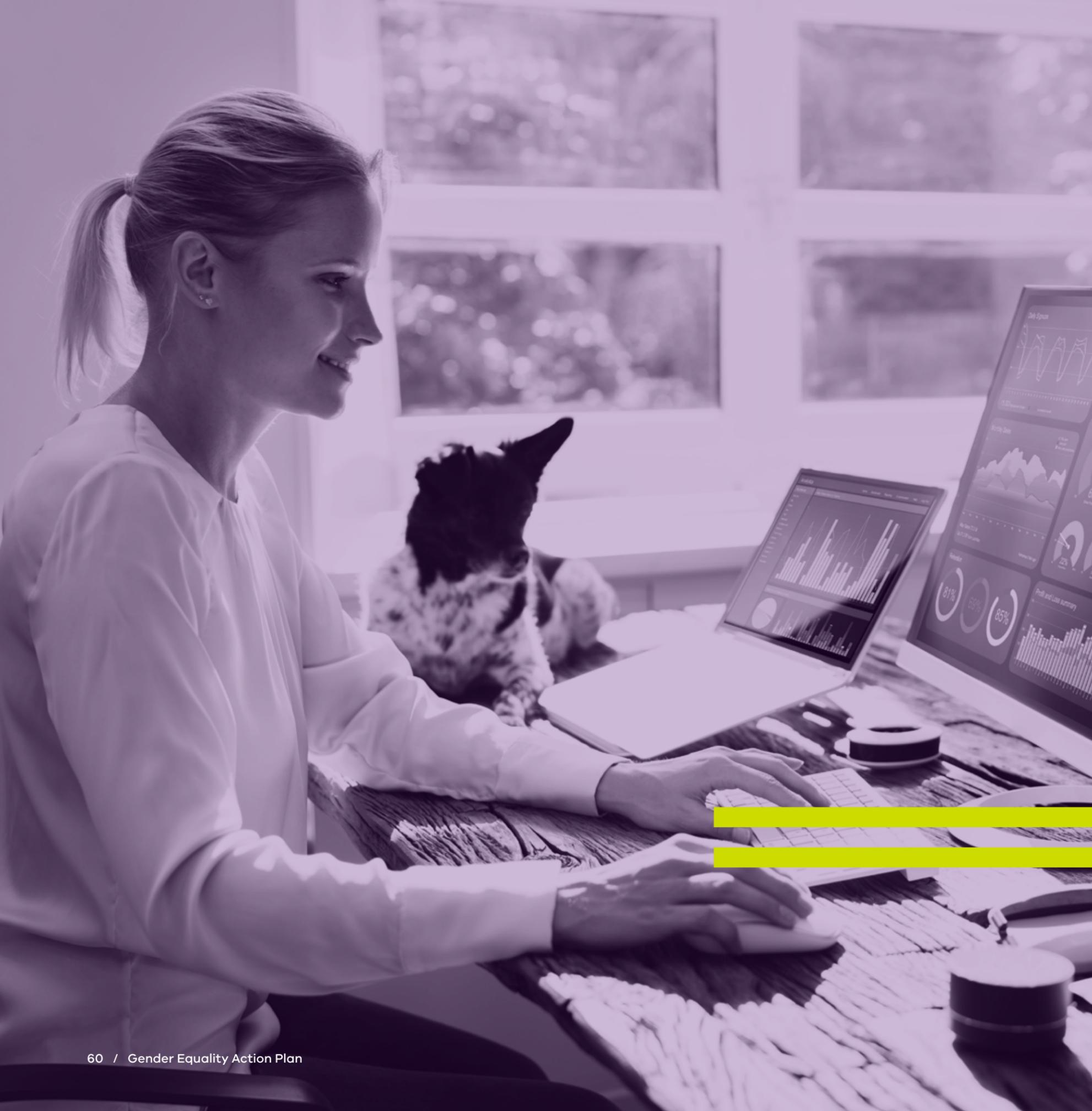
A strong governance framework will drive and monitor progress

The GEAP is underpinned by, and evaluated against the gender equality indicators, experiential data and evidence

Strategies and measures



The department has identified strategies to drive reform under four focus areas. Flagship strategies to build the foundations for sustainable change, along with strategies required by the Gender Equality Act, have been identified.



Focus area 1

Improving data on gender and intersectionality

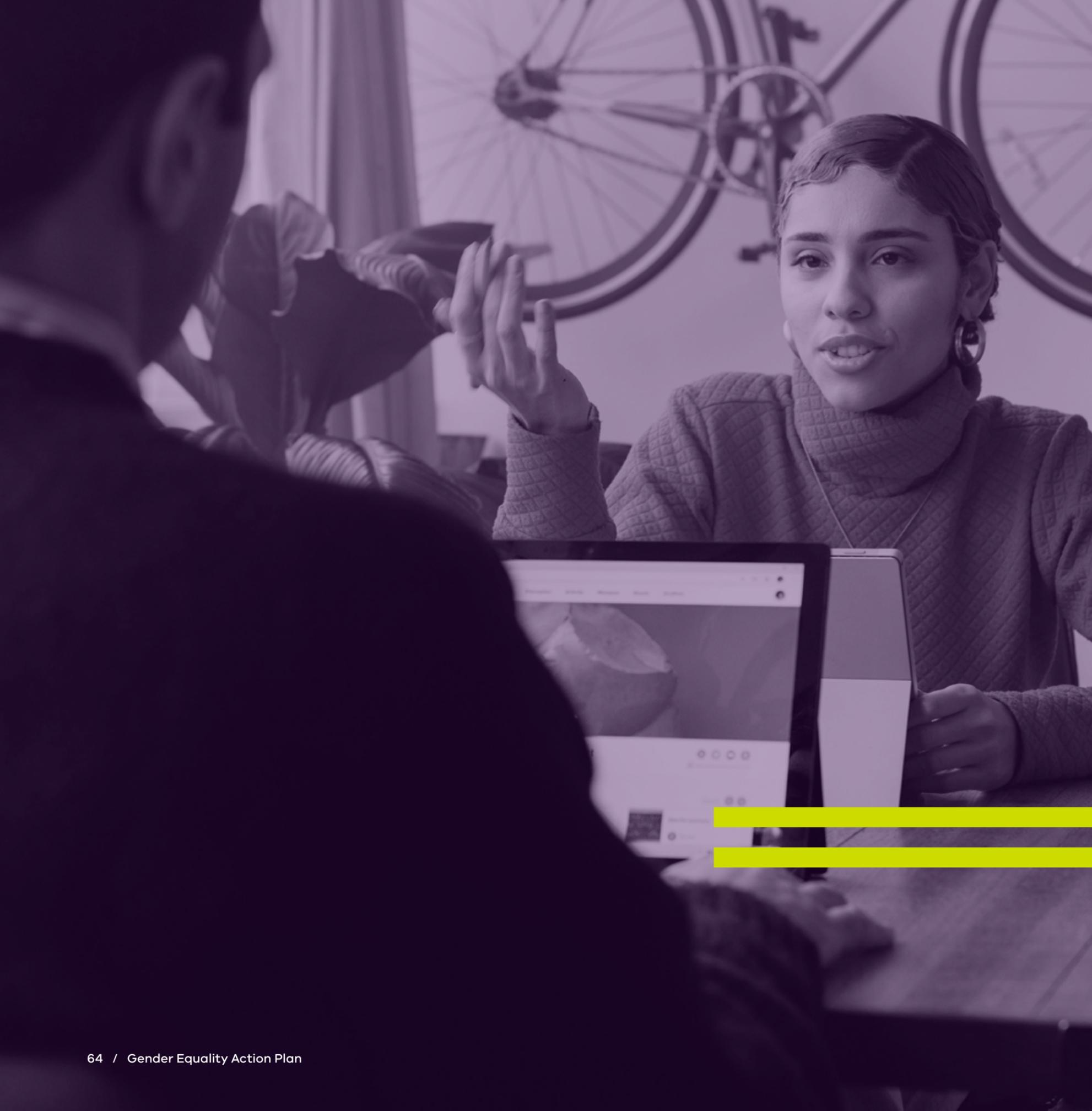


Our Goal:

Improve data collection and analysis to better inform policies, programs, services, and workforce strategies. Short-term goals will focus on achieving improved workforce data and developing a data improvement plan to support longer-term system reform.

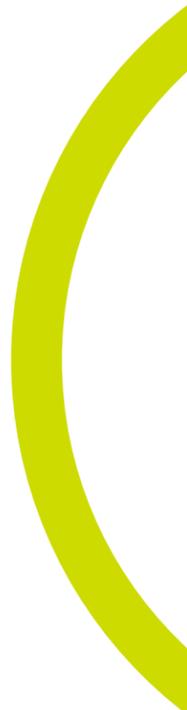
Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Develop and implement a data improvement plan which includes guidance on measurement, collection, monitoring and analysis of diversity data across the employee lifecycle to ensure consistent and robust data collection and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Data improvement plan delivered and implemented. = Collection of intersectional data through HR/Payroll systems upgraded. = Guidance materials on HR data collection and analysis delivered. = Qualitative data on our intersectional gender composition aligns with key measures from the People Matter Survey. 	2021-24
Participation in the People Matter Survey (PMS) and analysis of data against the GEAP to ensure currency of action (Gender Equality Act indicators 1 and 4-6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = 15 per cent increase in staff participation rate by 2025. = PMS findings communicated to staff. = GEAP updated to reflect new information. 	Annual

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Conduct regular gender pay equity analysis (Gender Equality Act indicator 3).	= Pay equity results published on the department's public website annually on Equal Pay Day.	Annual
Intersectionality is embedded into the department's Stakeholder Engagement Framework to collect 'lived and living experience' data.	= Intersectional lived and living experience data collected and used to inform policies, programs and services in alignment with GIA guidelines and reporting requirements.	2021-22
Conduct a Gender Equality Act workplace gender audit (Gender Equality Act indicator 1-7).	= Progress in relation to Gender Equality Act indicators reported to the Commission.	2023 and 2025



Focus area 2

Building capability and capacity related to equality



Our Goal:

Empowering staff and clients to understand how equality can improve people's lives in the workplace, at home and in society.

Strategic framework and policies

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Develop a departmental Intersectionality Strategy to build capability in considering intersectionality in policy and program development, service delivery and internal workforce strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Strategy developed and implemented. = The department has embedded intersectionality into core functions such as business planning, data analysis, and workforce management. 	2021-23
Develop a departmental gender equality policy that outlines equity and diversity principles and practices to improve gender equality outcomes within the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Policy developed and implemented. = Equity and diversity principles have been embedded in key departmental strategies and corporate plans. = Increase in the number of staff (from 66 per cent to 76 per cent by 2025) who feel that gender is not a barrier to success in the organisation (PMS data). = Increase in the number of staff (from 73 per cent to 84 per cent by 2025) who feel that work is allocated fairly regardless of gender (PMS data). 	2023-24

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Develop diversity and inclusion action plans (Disability Action Plan, Multicultural and Multifaith Action Plan, LGBTIQ+ Action Plan) that include a gendered approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Action plans developed with consideration of gender. 	2021-23
Develop a framework and guidance on undertaking GIA within the department (Gender Equality Act requirement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Framework and guidance have been developed specific to the department's work. = Increase in departmental staff undertaking and completing GIA. 	2021-23
Victim Services, Support and Reform (VSSR) seeks Rainbow Tick Accreditation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = VSSR receives Rainbow Tick Accreditation via online document submission and on-site assessment. = Learnings from accreditation process have been documented and shared in governance forums and communications. 	2022-23

Dedicated governance structures to build workforce capacity

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Embed the Gender Equality Steering Committee and Gender Equality Working Group as governance structures to implement the GEAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Terms of Reference for Gender Equality Steering Committee and Working Group are developed to reflect roles and responsibilities in the implementation of GEAP. = Lead responsibility and supporting areas represented on the Gender Equality Steering Committee. = Each Group and key business units represented on the Gender Equality Working Group. = Progress against strategies reported every two years to the Board of Management. 	2021-25
Develop a Critical Friends Network (CFN) to build workforce capacity to undertake GIA (Gender Equality Act requirement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Terms of Reference for Critical Friends Network developed to outline scope and role of members. = Each Group represented on the Critical Friends Network. 	2022-25
Coordinate the interdepartmental Intersectionality Community of Practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = At least four meetings per year delivered. = Each government department represented on the Intersectionality Community of Practice. 	2021-25

Communication and events

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Develop a communications strategy to increase awareness and understanding of gender equality in building an inclusive, safe and equitable workforce and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Annual communications strategy developed and implemented. = Visual audit of communications outputs conducted to assess gender and intersectional representation. = Key communications and events reviewed to assess participation rates and engagement. 	Annual

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Strengthen the Victorian emergency management sector's opportunities to improve engagement with, and inclusion of, women through the development and implementation of the 2021-22 Sector-wide inclusion and diversity 'Voice and Values' Communication and Engagement Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Social media celebration of Australasian Women in Emergency Management Day developed and implemented. = Number of partner organisations that shared content celebrating Australasian Women in Emergencies Day, to demonstrate commitment. = Panel session developed and hosted, as part of the Emergency Services Foundation's 2022 International Women's Day conference, discussing a topic that impacts women in Emergency Management. 	2021-22
Develop a communications plan to address positive workplace behaviours and direct people to relevant policies, training, support and reporting mechanisms, as part of the respect framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Key communications reviewed to assess engagement. = Reduction in the number of staff (from 53 per cent to 33 per cent by 2025) who feel there would be negative consequences for their reputation by reporting sexual harassment (PMS data). = Increase in the number of staff (from 47 per cent to 60 per cent by 2025) who feel satisfied with the way their sexual harassment complaint was handled (PMS data). 	2022-25

Training and professional development for staff

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Deliver mandatory <i>Sexual Harassment Prevention</i> training (e-learning and face-to-face) and <i>Respect in the Workplace</i> training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = 85 per cent of staff complete the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Respect in the workplace training, with new starters completing training within first six months. = Pre and post-training evaluation undertaken to capture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of understanding of what sexual harassment is and the forms it can take. • Levels of understanding of where to seek support and how to report. 	Annual
Deliver Foundational Family Violence Training (FFVT) for managers and non-managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Pre and post-training evaluation undertaken to measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff attitudes in relation to the drivers of family violence based on the National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS). • Increase in staff understanding on how to recognise family violence and what to do to respond to a victim survivor / perpetrator disclosure. = Increase in the number of staff (from 67 per cent to 80 per cent by 2025), who feel that the organisation would support them if they needed to take family violence leave (PMS data). 	2021-25
Develop and deliver GIA training (Gender Equality Act requirement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Workshops and advisory service for staff delivered. = Feedback sought via a survey that departmental staff are familiar and comfortable with the GIA process. 	2021-23

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Review bystander training for staff to determine if standalone training needs to be provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Review completed and recommendations implemented as required. 	2022-25
Develop and implement holistic professional development program that includes coaching, mentoring and supporting women in leadership within the department's Integrity, Legal and Law Reform Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Integrity, Legal and Law Reform Group professional development program developed and implemented. = Career pathways for staff in the Integrity, Legal and Law Reform Group improved. = Increase in the number of staff in the Integrity, Legal and Law Reform Group who feel that the group makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit (PMS and/or pulse check survey data). = Increase in the number of staff in the Integrity, Legal and Law Reform Group who feel that the group encourages respectful workplace behaviours (PMS and/or pulse check survey data). 	2021-23

Training and professional development for clients

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
<p>Tuning into Respectful Relationships – a psycho-educational program that introduces prisoners to the concept of healthy, respectful relationships.</p> <p>(Program adapted to be delivered to Vietnamese and Horn of Africa groups).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = High program uptake (referral and attendance) - referral to English, Vietnamese and horn of Africa streams. = Improved education around respectful relationships within prisoner cohort. = Expansion to a further nine prisons (already delivered at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and Metropolitan Remand Centre). = Feedback from service provider quarterly reports. 	2021-22
<p>Vocational Centre of Excellence program at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Rollout of the Vocational Centre of Excellence model at the Centre with two new focus areas - civil construction and the hospitality/food service industries. = Increased skill development and employability of participants post-release. 	2021-25





Focus area 3

Equitable pathways
to career development
and leadership



Our Goal:

Improving diverse representation of women in leadership and equity for career development, remuneration, leave and flexibility.

Balancing work and life

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
<p>Develop a People Strategy across the employee lifecycle that is intersectional in its approach to build and maintain an engaged, flexible, productive and positive employee experience and workplace.</p> <p>Focus on improving diverse representation, and career and leadership pathways for women from Aboriginal, multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, and women with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = People Strategy developed and released. = Progress reports submitted to the Board of Management. 	2021-23
<p>Develop a Flexible Working Strategy that accounts for different lived and living experience and work environments (Gender Equality Act indicator 6.2).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Flexible Work Strategy developed and implemented. = Increase in the number of staff (from 55 per cent to 70 per cent by 2025) who feel confident that if they asked for a flexible work arrangement it would be given due consideration (PMS data). = Increase in the number of staff (from 46 per cent to 59 per cent by 2025) who feel there is a positive culture within the department in relation to employees who use flexible work arrangements (PMS data). 	2022-23

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
<p>Develop a Guide for Parental Leave (Gender Equality Act indicator 6).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Guide co-designed with staff and delivered. 	2022-23

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
<p>Review existing systems and culture related to carers leave to enhance uptake and support (Gender Equality Act indicator 6.3).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Review of support for carers completed. = Increase in the number of staff (from 63 per cent to 82 per cent by 2025) who feel that the department supports employees with family or other caring responsibilities regardless of gender (PMS data). = Increase in the number of staff (from 45 per cent to 63 per cent by 2025) who feel that having caring responsibilities is not a barrier to success in the organisation. 	2022-23

Career development

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Develop and implement the Victorian Emergency Management Sector-wide Sponsorship of Diverse Talent Pilot Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Victorian Emergency Management Sector-wide Sponsorship of Diverse Talent Pilot Program delivered. = Report on the number of women and emergency management organisations who are involved in the pilot program (maximum number 42 women from 14 organisations). = Comprehensive evaluation including pre-and post program surveys undertaken to determine if participation in program assisted women to make meaningful progress towards their predetermined developmental goals. 	2021-23
<p>Undertake an assessment of existing career development pathways from an intersectional perspective (Gender Equality Act indicator 5).</p> <p>Focus on improving diverse representation, and career and leadership pathways for women from Aboriginal, multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, and women with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Report that assesses current state and recommendations for improvement delivered. = Recommendations incorporated into People Strategy activities. 	2022-23

Ensuring pay equity

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Identify pay gaps and targeted strategies to address factors that contribute to gender pay gaps (Gender Equality Act indicator 3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Gender pay gap reduced. = Pay equity reports submitted annually to the Board of Management. 	2021-25

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Review remuneration policies and processes to ensure that language and content support gender equity (Gender Equality Act indicator 3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Policies and process updated as required. 	2023-24



Focus area 4

Creating a safer,
empowering and
inclusive culture



Our Goal:

To provide environments where staff and clients feel safe, respected, supported and valued.

Flagship strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Deliver the Cultural Review of the Adult Correctional Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Cultural review delivered. = Response from the department to the Review's recommendations delivered. 	2021-22
Develop multi-agency processes to prevent, report and manage bullying, harassment and sexual harassment and promote sector values for the State Control Centre (multi-agency emergency response facility EMV manages) (Gender Equality Act indicator 4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Sector-wide agreement on prevention and reporting processes delivered, to assist in ensuring individuals who experience incidents feel supported and incidents are effectively investigated. = Common doctrine guidelines by the sector's joint operations team completed. 	2021-23

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Review the <i>Building Safer Communities</i> (BSC) program to determine the extent to which gender equity and intersectionality have been incorporated into program design and delivery; and to inform future rounds of the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Relevant crime prevention initiatives considered principles of inclusion and cultural safety in design and delivery (indicator from Crime Prevention Strategy Outcomes Framework, that funded projects are required to report on). = GIA undertaken as part of the BSC program review in 2024, following completion of round one projects. 	2024-25
Develop a Corrections LGBTIQ+ Policy, with a focus on supporting the needs of trans and gender diverse people who are in correctional facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Policy developed and implemented, to be reviewed in two years. 	2021-23
Expanding the Community Based Koori Youth Justice Worker program (including gender-specific responses for young women and after-hours support).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Program expanded with a focus on gender-specific responses. 	2021-24

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Living Free from Violence – a prison-based program designed for women, transgender and gender diverse people who have caused harm or used violence in their relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Group and 1:1 services delivered. = Improved education around respectful relationships within prisoner groups. 	2021-23
Men’s Healing and Behaviour Change Program for men, including Aboriginal men, convicted of family violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Offence related group sessions delivered. 	2021-23
Therapeutic counselling for victim-survivors of family violence in prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Group based programs delivered at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and Tarrengower. = Provision of advice and support to women who have experienced family violence. 	2021-23
Family Violence Practice Leads embedded in Corrections and Youth Justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Recruitment of two Practice Leads – one in Corrections Victoria and one in Justice Services. = Best practice family violence training rolled out. = Increased capability for Corrections and Justices Services staff to recognise and respond to family violence. 	2021-23

Strategies	Measures/milestones	Timing
Women’s Diversion and Rehabilitation Strategy – Stage One.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Reduction in demand for beds in the women’s prison system (overall strategy goal). = Women’s employment specialists embedded in prisons. = Improved access to housing for women post-imprisonment. = Improved access to post release support for women. 	2021-23
Family Violence Financial Counsellors (Consumer Affairs Victoria).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Training delivered to financial counsellors to recognise and respond to family violence victims/survivors. = Number of family violence victims/survivors accessing financial counselling services. 	2021-23



Leadership and resourcing

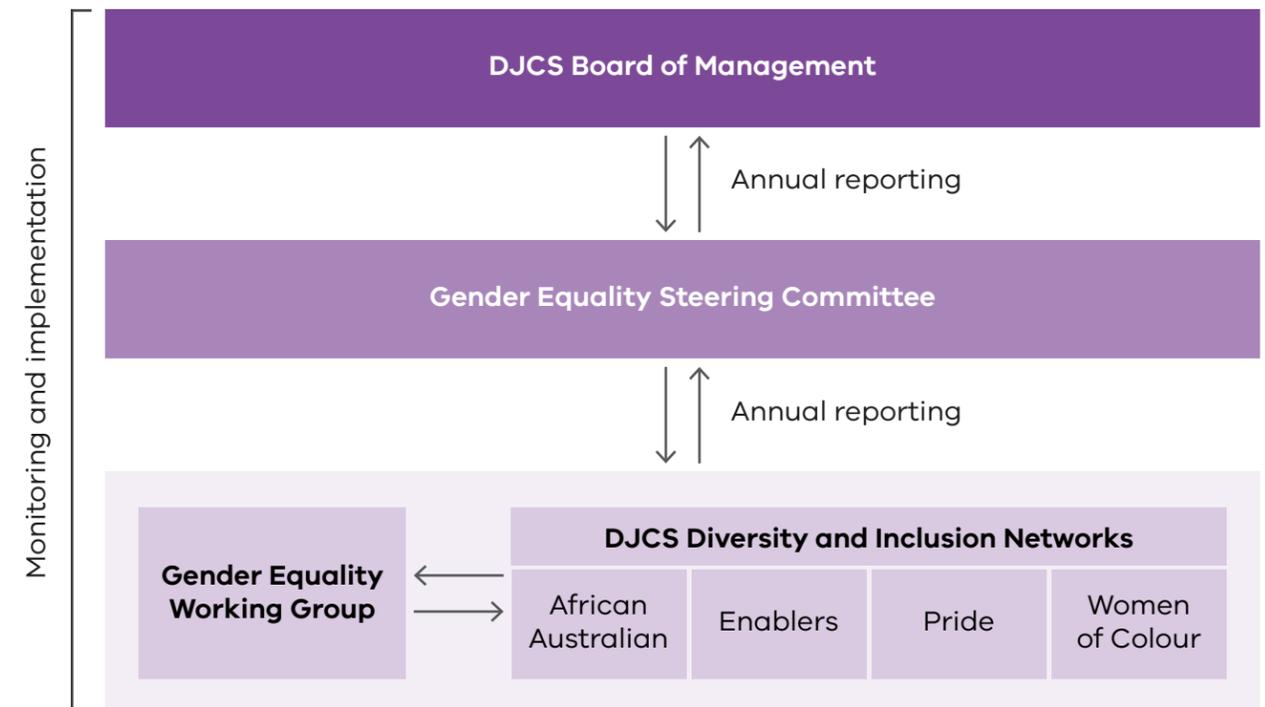
Board of Management

The Board of Management were actively involved in the development of the GEAP, including its two phases of consultation, and are committed to advancing gender equality within the department and the broader justice sector.

Board of Management members are also committed to building their understanding of gender equality and intersectionality and support training and upskilling in this area.

Governance structure

The Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety group is responsible for coordinating a whole-of-department strategic approach to stakeholder partnerships and the delivery of our inclusion and intersectionality agenda. We recognise that work to advance gender equality within the department and the broader justice sector requires a collaborative approach and a strong foundation in the form of governance structures.





Gender Equality Steering Committee and Working Group

The Gender Equality Steering Committee (the Committee) currently includes eight representatives from seven business units who have had responsibility for leading and/or supporting key components of work to date relating to the department's obligations under the Gender Equality Act. The Committee will continue to provide guidance on key components of this work and will be expanded to include representatives from all lead areas to support the implementation of the GEAP.

The Gender Equality Working Group includes a broad range of staff from officer level to executive level, and is representative of all Groups within our department. The Working Group currently includes 30 staff and was established to share previous, current or planned work occurring within their areas to promote gender equality to inform the GEAP. It will continue to be key mechanism to guide the implementation of GEAP strategies at a local level.

The Inclusion and Intersectionality branch within Service Delivery Reform, Coordination and Workplace Safety will be responsible for coordinating the activities of both the Steering Committee and Working Group.

Diversity and Inclusion Networks

The following departmental networks are embedded into governance and will continue to play a critical role in guiding and shaping this plan:

- = DJCS African Australian Network
- = DJCS Enablers Network
- = DJCS Pride Network
- = DJCS Women of Colour Network.

Strategic resourcing plan

The department recognises that resourcing is essential to make reasonable and material progress towards workplace gender equality. A strategic resourcing plan has been developed to estimate and document resourcing required to implement strategies.

Resourcing will evolve over the life of the GEAP as some strategies are yet to commence and scoping requirements may change in response to a constantly changing environment. Resourcing impacts will also occur as new strategies are added to the GEAP as it is a living document. In recognition of this, the strategic resourcing plan will be reviewed annually for currency.

Measuring progress



How we will know the action plan has been effective

Monitoring our strategies designed to promote and advance gender equality will enable the department to know we are on the right track to achieve our vision and provide the flexibility to respond to rapidly changing environments, emerging research and best practice.

Governance structures have been established to ensure regular monitoring of implementation against milestones. All relevant business units will be involved in detailed annual reporting against the GEAP, coordinated by the Inclusion and Intersectionality branch. Progress will be published in the department's annual report. In accordance with our legislative obligations under the Gender Equality Act, we will also report progress after two years to the Commission.

Strong governance will allow us to track progress and update the GEAP as necessary. A formal external evaluation will be conducted towards the end of Year Four (2024-25) to identify the successes and challenges of the current GEAP, as well as provide recommendations for the development of the 2025-2029 GEAP.



Appendix A: Overview of departmental, state and national policy

National	State	Departmental
= <i>Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</i>	= <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)</i>	= Statement of Direction
= <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i>	= <i>Disability Act 2006 (Vic)</i>	= Corporate Plan
= <i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)</i>	= <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)</i>	= Justice Strategic Plan
= Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031	= <i>Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)</i>	= The Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement
= National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and Fourth Action Plan: Moving Ahead 2019-2022	= <i>Multicultural Victoria Act 2011 (Vic)</i>	= People Strategy (in development)
= National Principles on Coercive Control (in development)	= <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)</i>	= Intersectionality Strategy (in development)
= OurWatch: Change the story – A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women (Second Edition)	= Building Equality Policy	= Disability Action Plan Framework 2019-2022
= OurWatch: Workplace Equality and Respect Standards.	= Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change 2017 (ten year plan)	= Cultural Diversity Plan Framework 2019-2022.
	= Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement	
	= Free From Violence: Victoria's Prevention Strategy 2016	
	= Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-2032	
	= Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy (2021)	
	= State Disability Plan 2022-2026.	

Appendix B: Insight Report

Overview of Workplace Gender Audit

On 31 March 2021, the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)* came into effect. It requires defined entities (Victorian public sector organisations, councils and universities) to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and promote gender equality in their policies, programs, and services.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety (the department) is required to:

- = develop and implement a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years, which includes:
 - results of a workplace gender audit
 - strategies for achieving workplace gender equality.
- = publicly report on our progress in relation to workplace gender equality every two years
- = promote gender equality in our workplace, policies, programs and services
- = complete gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing policies, programs and delivering services that have a significant impact on the public.

The department completed its first workplace gender audit based on data as at 30 June 2021. Workforce and employee experience data was collected from payroll and HR systems, People Matter Survey (PMS) 2021, Diversity and Inclusion Pulse Survey 2021 and Workplace Equality and Respect Self-Assessment 2020, to identify critical gaps and assess capacity for change to advance gender equality. The PMS included questions developed in consultation with the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector to enable Gender Equality Act reporting and action planning requirements. The department had a survey response rate of 25 per cent which met the Commission's threshold.

The audit included data on the following gender equality indicators:

- = Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
- = Gender composition of governing bodies
- = Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
- = Sexual harassment
- = Recruitment and promotion practices

- = Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements for those with family or caring responsibilities
- = Gendered segregation within the workplace.

In line with legislative obligations, results were used as a key component of formal consultation with staff and the Community Public Section Union (Victoria). Audit data and consultation findings were used to inform the development of the department's GEAP.

The key findings presented in this report met the recommended minimum level of workplace gender audit data for defined entities to include in their GEAPs as provided by the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.



High-level Workplace Gender Audit findings

Key findings of the workplace gender audit as at 30 June 2021 include:

Gender composition of all levels of the workforce

Data

- = The department's workforce is comprised of 10,698 staff: 5,813 women (54.3 per cent), 4,875 men (45.6 per cent) and 10 another gender identity (0.1 per cent).
- = 88.2 per cent of the department's workforce are employed on a full-time basis: 48.6 per cent are women compared with 51.4 per cent of men. 8.4 per cent are engaged in part-time work: 89 per cent are women compared with 11 per cent men.
- = 85.5 per cent of the department's workforce are employed on a permanent/ongoing basis: 53.8 per cent are women compared to 46.1 per cent men. 11.1 per cent are employed on contracts: 59.5 per cent are women, compared to 40.3 per cent men. 3.5 per cent are employed on a casual basis: 51.1 per cent are women compared to 48.9 per cent men.

- = 640 women (56.7 per cent) occupy senior executive and management roles, compared to 488 men (43.3 per cent).
- = employed in VPS 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 or equivalent roles, compared to 4,387 men (45.8 per cent).
- = In executive level positions, 6.8 per cent work part-time: 83.3 per cent of this group are women compared to 16.7 per cent of men.

Gender disaggregated data analysis of the 2021 PMS revealed:

- = 67 per cent of staff (72 per cent of women, 65 per cent of men, and 40 per cent non-binary staff) agreed with the statement "There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees of different sexes/genders".

Analysis

- = Women comprise a greater proportion of the department's workforce at all levels, from senior executive to VPS levels.
- = The majority of staff are employed on a full-time basis across the department at various levels and, where part-time work is engaged, there remains significant gender disparity. Women are more likely to take on part-time work compared with men, even at the most senior levels of the department.

Gender composition of governing bodies

Data

- = As at 30 June 2021, the department's Board of Management was comprised of nine women (60 per cent) and six men (40 per cent).
- = One woman (6.7 per cent) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- = There is currently no recorded data on disability, cultural identity, religion or sexual orientation.

Analysis

- = Women are well represented within the department's governing body.
- = The lack of intersectional data means that we are unable to determine the diverse representation of women who comprise the department's governing body. This data is critical to informing actions to foster opportunities for women who experience intersecting forms of inequality to reach these leadership positions.

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

Data

- = The gender pay gap (based on median full-time equivalent total remuneration, including leave loading) between men and women was 2.5 per cent. While based on annualised base salary it was -3.1 per cent.
- = The gender pay gap (based on average full-time equivalent total remuneration, including leave loading) between men and women was 3.6 per cent, while based on annualised base salary it was -0.2 per cent.
- = Overall, men on average were paid \$3,977 more than women, and the median salary difference is \$2,573 per annum.
- = The highest average gender pay gap is at the VPS grade 7 or equivalent at 15.4 per cent, where men on averaged are paid \$29,348 more than women per year.

Analysis

- = While the overall gender pay gap at the department is relatively low, it does vary when examining like-for-like positions within the department. Further analysis will be completed as part of the GEAP to identify these areas and remediate where appropriate.
- = The department is performing well when compared to national and state data. As at November 2020, the national gender pay gap was 13.4 per cent and Victoria's gender pay gap was 10.9 per cent⁴. Within the Victorian Public Sector, as at 30 June 2020, the gender pay gap of non-casual public service employees was 4.3 per cent⁵.

⁴ Based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistic and calculated by Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). Available from: [Australia's Gender Pay Gap Statistics 2021 | WGEA](#).

⁵ Available from: [Employee pay and gender pay - Victorian Public Sector Commission \(vpssc.vic.gov.au\)](#).

Sexual harassment

Data

- = Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, the department had a total of 73 sexual harassment reports: 64 women (87.7 per cent) were complainants, compared to nine men (12.3 per cent), and none for 'another gender identity'.
- = 65 reports were from departmental employees and eight were from clients.
- = All sexual harassment reports were handled internally.

Gender disaggregated data analysis of the 2021 PMS revealed:

- = 70 per cent of staff (74 per cent of women, 70 per cent of men, and 46 per cent of non-binary staff) who completed the PMS agreed with the statement "My organisation encourages respectful workplace behaviours". This is less than the comparator group average of 91 per cent, which compares the department to similar organisations.
- = 52 per cent of staff agreed with the statement "My organisation takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination."

- = 51 per cent of staff agreed with the statement "I feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work."
- = 10 per cent of staff (11 per cent of women, and 9 per cent of men) who completed the PMS reported experiencing sexual harassment in the past 12 month. The most common forms were:
 - 'Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made me feel offended' (64 per cent)
 - 'Intrusive questions about my private life or comments about my physical appearance' (51 per cent).
- = The majority tried to 'laugh it off' or 'forget about it' or 'pretended it didn't bother me' (86 per cent). Only six per cent 'submitted a formal complaint' and only two per cent 'told human resources'.
- = The main reason why staff did not submit a formal complaint was 53 per cent 'believed there would be negative consequences for my reputation' and 43 per cent 'didn't think it would make a difference'. Of the six per cent who made a complaint, close to half (47 per cent) were satisfied with how the complaint was handled.

Analysis

- = The audit findings align with the Respect@Work Report, which found that women were substantially more likely than men to have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime (85 per cent to 56 per cent).
- = PMS survey findings reveal that there is under reporting of formal sexual harassment complaints and the findings also indicate improvements can be made in the reporting process and how complaints are handled. Future data capture related to the satisfaction of outcome of the matter would be useful in ascertaining whether people felt supported through the process and were content with the resolution.

Recruitment and promotion practices

Data

Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021:

- = 2,081 people (19.5 per cent) were recruited to the department: 1,273 (61.2 per cent) of new recruits were women, compared to 808 men (38.8 per cent).
- = 563 staff (5.3 per cent) received permanent promotions: 352 (62.5 per cent) were women, compared to 211 men (37.5 per cent). Of these, 69 staff were promoted in leadership positions, 45 (65.2 per cent) were women, compared to 24 men (34.8 per cent).
- = 10,116 staff (94.5 per cent) participated in career development training: 5,491 (54.3 per cent) were women, compared to 4,625 men (45.7 per cent).

- = 4,077 staff (37.5 per cent) were awarded higher duties: 2,264 (55.5 per cent) were women, compared to 1,813 men (44.5 per cent).
- = 1,190 staff (11.1 per cent) were awarded internal secondments: 732 (61.6 per cent) were women, compared to 457 men (38.2 per cent).
- = 1,409 staff (13.2 per cent) exited the department: 801 (56.8 per cent) were women, compared to 608 men (43.2 per cent).

Gender disaggregated data analysis of the 2021 PMS revealed:

- = 57 per cent of staff feel that recruitment and promotion practices are fair and gender and other intersecting identities are not a barrier to success. However, only a third (33 per cent) of staff felt they have an equal chance at promotion in my organisation. Gender disaggregated data analysis revealed 37 per cent of women felt this way, compared to 34 per cent of men and 21 per cent of non-binary staff.

Analysis

- = Women experienced increased opportunities for promotion and career development (including training, secondments and acting arrangements). This included increased promotion at the senior executive and manager levels.
- = A significant proportion of staff do not feel practices are fair, suggesting greater transparency and accountability in recruitment and promotion is required. Further analysis of employee experience data will be undertaken to determine the impact of recruitment and promotion practices on groups of staff who traditionally experience barriers to advancement (for example, staff with disability, older staff).
- = Despite opportunities for advancement and development, a greater number of women exited the department compared with men in the past 12 months (as at 30 June 2021).

Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements for those with family or caring responsibilities

Data

Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021:

- = 1,609 employees (15 per cent) accessed formal (purchased leave) flexible leave: 919 (57.1 per cent) were women, compared to 609 men (42.9 per cent).
- = 91 women (71.7 per cent) in leadership positions accessed formal flexible leave compared to 36 men (28.3 per cent).
- = 3,234 employees accessed carers leave: 1,729 (53.5 per cent) were women, compared to 1,505 men (46.5 per cent).
- = 498 employees took parental leave: 477 (95.8 per cent) were women, compared to 21 men (4.2 per cent).

- = 26 employees exited the department during parental leave, including 24 women (92.3 per cent) (14 voluntary, 10 involuntary) compared to two men (voluntary).
- = 54 accessed family violence leave: 40 (74.1 per cent) were women, compared to 14 men (25.9 per cent).

Gender disaggregated data analysis of the 2021 PMS revealed:

- = 46 per cent of staff (50 per cent of women, 47 per cent of men, and 29 per cent of non-binary staff) agreed with the statement "There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who use flexible work arrangements". This is significantly less than the comparator group average of 74 per cent, which compares the department to similar organisations.
- = 63 per cent of staff (67 per cent of women, 62 per cent of men, and 33 per cent of non-binary staff) agreed with the statement "My organisation supports employees with family or other caring responsibility, regardless of gender". This is less than the comparator group average of 86 per cent, which compares the department to similar organisations.

Analysis

- = All employees have access to a range of flexible working arrangements. There are limitations to extracting and analysing the number of employees who utilised flexible working arrangements due to the various leave types.
- = Women are accessing greater levels of formal (purchased) leave, parental leave and carers leave. This is the case for women in leadership positions who overwhelmingly accessed more formal flexible leave compared with men.
- = The data also shows that after extended periods of leave (namely parental leave) women are faced with circumstances whereby they cannot always return to their substantive role. Further analysis is required to determine the circumstances under which involuntary decisions are made. This information is critical to inform appropriate actions to address potential systemic and societal barriers women experience when returning from parental leave.
- = PMS data indicates that organisational culture in relation to employees who use flexible work arrangements can be improved.

Gendered segregation within the workplace

Data

- = Table 1 provides a breakdown of the gender composition against the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) code major groups to identify gender segregated occupations within the department.

Table 1

ANZSCO	Women	Men
1 – Managers	1,067 (59.7%)	717 (40.1%)
2 – Professionals	977 (67.1%)	478 (32.9%)
3 – Technicians and trades workers	11 (57.9%)	8 (42.1%)
4 – Community and personal service workers	1,985 (40.7%)	2,884 (59.2%)
5 – Clerical and administrative workers	1,756 (69.9%)	751 (29.9%)
6 – Sales workers	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
7 – Machinery operators and drivers	13 (37.1%)	22 (62.9%)
8 – Labourers	4 (21.1%)	15 (78.9%)
Total	5,813 (54.3%)	4,875 (45.6%)

- = More men occupy the following role types/occupation groups, as per the ANZSCO code major groups:
 - Labourers: 15 (78.9 per cent)
 - Machinery operators and drivers: 22 (62.9 per cent)
 - Community and personal service workers: 2,884 (59.2 per cent).
- = In contrast, there are more women in the following occupation groups:
 - 161 (87.0 per cent) in allied health
 - 193 (76.6 per cent) in community youth justice worker roles
 - 6 (75.0 per cent) in legal
 - 3,195 (66.6 per cent) in Victorian Public Service
 - 655 (65.4 per cent) in community corrections practitioner roles.
- = PMS data indicates that 73 per cent of departmental staff perceived that the department practices are inclusive and respectful, and they feel safe at work. They also perceived that gendered work segregation does not negatively impact their experiences of bullying, discrimination, aggression or violence.
- = Analysis of specific departmental role types identified that more men occupy the following role types/occupation groups:
 - 2,336 (66.2 per cent) in custodial roles
 - 85 (63.9 per cent) in sheriff's officer role
 - 358 (58.3 per cent) in youth justice settings.

Analysis

- = Despite the representation of women across the department, men are still more likely to occupy roles in areas that have traditionally been male-dominated, such as labourers and custodial roles.
- = It is positive that the majority of staff feel the department's workforce is inclusive and safe regardless of gender segregation. Further analysis will be undertaken to better understand experience within different workgroups from an intersectionality perspective.

Policy Review

Data

- = The department has 12 policies related to different aspects of gender equality. However, there is not an overarching gender equality policy.

Analysis

- = Findings from the Workplace Equality and Respect Self-Assessment revealed that there is a lack of awareness about current policies and their application.

Key considerations

The following needs to be considered in relation to this audit:

- = This is a baseline data report with progress being measured in future reports.
- = Data has been collected and verified by specialists within the department and Victorian Public Sector Commission.
- = Relevant intersectional data is not currently collected in some areas which means we are unable to get an accurate workplace profile of women with intersecting identities related to disability, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.



Justice
and Community
Safety