



GREAT OCEAN ROAD
COAST & PARKS AUTHORITY

Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026



Statement from our CEO

The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (the Authority) exists to care for, protect and manage the coast and parks traversed by the Great Ocean Road so that they can be enjoyed by all, now and for generations to come. To achieve this, we need to have an engaged and diverse workforce that strives to create a sense of belonging amongst employees, is highly innovative and has the cultural competency to genuinely build partnerships, particularly with our two Traditional Owner groups represented by the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

We recognise that all Victorians should live in a safe and equal society. Since the merger of the two former Coastal Committees of Management in December 2020, we have embarked on a large program of change, much of which is still coming to fruition. This process of developing our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) has ensured that as we grow and change, we will intentionally create equal opportunities for people of all genders and intersecting identities. We do this because we have a shared responsibility to advance gender equality in Victoria, but also because our organisation needs access to the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

The exercise of reviewing our data and listening to the experiences of our employees has been timely and valuable. It has confirmed that the change we are embarking on in our policies and processes is warranted and must continue. We also now understand the diversity of our workforce and will seek to proactively reduce gender segregation, understand the low representation of people living with disability and continue to access a widening talent pool to recruit people from a range of different cultural backgrounds.

This work will support the goals and objectives of the Authority while also contributing to creating gender equality within our communities.

Jodie Sizer
CEO

Case for change

The Authority recognises that gender equality is good for all Victorians. We also recognise that this work is vital to our success as an organisation moving forward. The business case for diversity is well documented. Diversity brings increased innovation, productivity and performance to the workforce. In the current climate where the talent pool has decreased significantly, it also improves retention and provides access to previously untapped talent markets. Like many other organisations, it has become increasingly difficult to find strong candidates for roles and focusing our sourcing on accessing diverse talent will assist with this business challenge.

Additionally, employees are six times more engaged in their work if they feel that they belong. Creating a sense of belonging for all employees is therefore vital to the success of our organisation in a time where workloads are high and growth is rapid.

We also recognise that to truly challenge gender stereotypes in the community we must seek to reduce gender segregation in the workplace. Challenging these norms will allow all of our existing and potential employees to 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.

**WE RECOGNISE THE
ROLE WE MUST PLAY IN
BUILDING GENUINE
RELATIONSHIPS WITH
THE TWO TRADITIONAL
OWNER GROUPS TO BUILD
CULTURAL COMPETENCE
INTO ALL LEVELS OF OUR
OPERATION**

We understand that gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls. We recognise the important role that family violence leave plays but also that this is not the whole story. Work is still required to create a safe, respectful and supportive space where people feel they can access this leave and not have it impact their career progression. Our managers must feel empowered and confident to recognise when an employee may be experiencing family violence and know how to act to help.

Gender equality is a human right and therefore we must progress with these actions and deliver on change for our employees and our communities. This work is about recognising barriers and then proactively working to remove them for the good of our business, our people and our communities.

**WE WILL BE CONSCIOUS
OF THE COMPOUNDING
EFFECTS THAT RACE,
ETHNICITY, AGE, SEXUALITY,
DISABILITY AND RELIGIOUS
BELIEFS HAVE (IN ADDITION
TO GENDER) ON A PERSON'S
CAREER TRAJECTORY AND
SENSE OF BELONGING**

Our priorities

We have identified three key priority areas for our GEAP:

- Create fair and equitable recruitment practices for all positions
- Inform and empower our leaders to demonstrate inclusive leadership
- Foster a positive culture towards flexible working practices.





Gender equality principles

AND THE GENDER EQUALITY ACT

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* outlines the requirements of all Public Service organisations in Victoria and details 10 principles to govern our work in this space. The Authority wholeheartedly commits to these principles and they have guided us in our work and the development of this plan.

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



Methodology

TASK	DETAILS
Phase 01 Data collection	Data was collected through the People matter survey, workplace profile audit and three employee focus groups.*
Phase 02 Data analysis	All data was reviewed and analysed with key priority areas identified and explored further.
Phase 03 Action development	A co-design workshop was held with organisational leaders to develop the actions.
Phase 04 Consultation	Further consultation was undertaken on the draft GEAP as prescribed by the commission.**

*Focus group topics were developed to further explore the key issues that were identified in the survey and the workplace profile audit. All employees were invited to attend these focus group sessions. It was recognised that casual and part time staff weren't well represented and therefore Action 2.4 has been developed to further explore their experiences.

The focus group topics were:

1. Impacts of flexible work on career progression,
2. Belonging and Inclusion in the workplace,
3. Fair and equal recruitment and promotion processes.

**Parties that were consulted include:

- All employees
- Board and Executive members
- Union representatives.

Resourcing

RESOURCE	ESTIMATED COST
1.0 FTE spread out over the course of a month over the next four years, resourced from the People and Culture team	\$110,000
External consultant to run workshops, run forums and adhoc consultation services over four year term averaging approximately 0.1 FTE quarterly	\$5,000
Performance Management System	\$15,000
Training and Education	\$20,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$150,000



What our data is telling us

GENDER COMPOSITION

Our workforce has a relatively even balance between men and women, however gender segregation is a concern. Some roles, such as Foreshore Rangers, are mostly held by men whereas office and cleaning roles are mostly held by women. For leadership roles, the three most senior positions in the organisation are held by men however there is gender parity at the manager, coordinator and team leader levels.

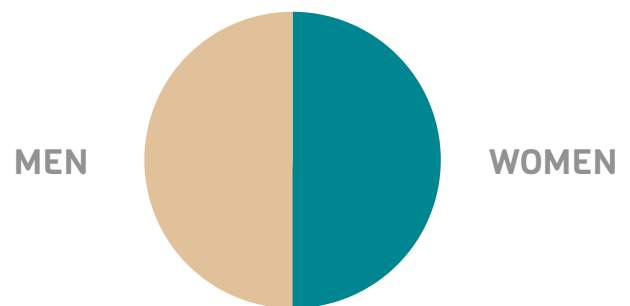
There have been some recent appointments that have increased the cultural diversity of our team, but according to the People matter survey we have low representation of people with disability, people from non-western backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people.

FLEXIBILITY

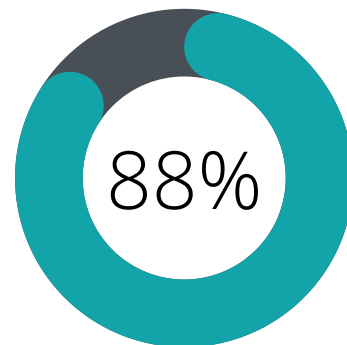
Men were less likely to believe there was equal support for those with caring responsibilities regardless of gender (71% compared with 80% of women). This belief was explored in the focus groups and we found that men working outdoors in particular could benefit from increased access to flexible working for caring purposes.

Only 60% of women agreed with the statement "There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who use flexible work arrangements" (75% men). The focus groups identified some limitations with part-time work and the impact this was having on career progression.

GOVERNING BODY



OUR GOVERNING BODY HAS GENDER BALANCE AND TWO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD ARE ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER



OF WOMEN (71% MEN) BELIEVED THEY HAD ACCESS TO THE FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS THEY NEEDED



What our data is telling us

GENDER PAY EQUITY

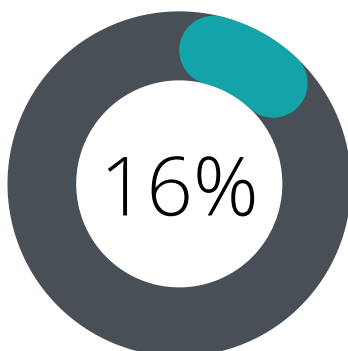
7.7%

Median base salary

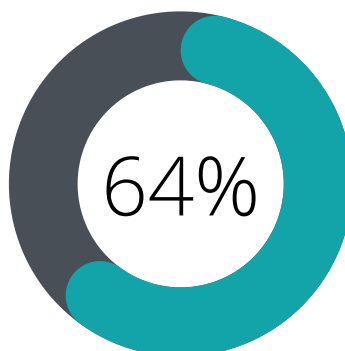
7.7%

Median total rem

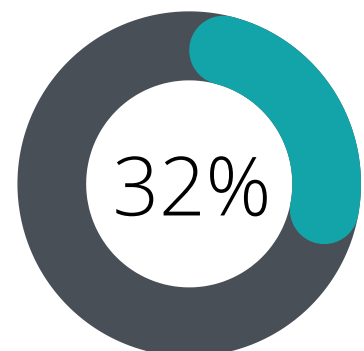
WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT



OF WOMEN HAD EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL ASSAULT



OF WOMEN (89% MEN) AGREED THE
ORGANISATION ENCOURAGES
RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE
BEHAVIOURS



OF WOMEN (28% MEN) HAD WITNESSED
BULLYING, HARASSMENT OR
DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

INCLUSION AND BELONGING

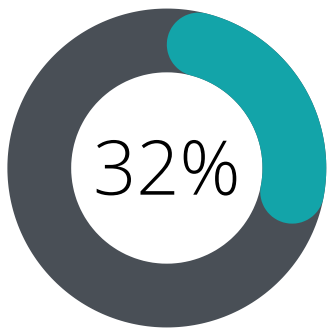


OF RESPONDENTS FELT THEY HAD A STRONG
PERSONAL ATTACHMENT TO THE ORGANISATION



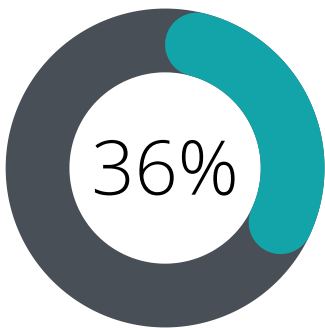
OF RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT PEOPLE IN THEIR
WORKGROUP SUPPORTED DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

What our data is telling us



OF LEADERS APPOINTED IN THE REPORTING PERIOD WERE WOMEN

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION



OF WOMEN BELIEVED THE ORGANISATION MADE FAIR RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION DECISIONS (50% MEN)

	% Women in agreement	% Men in agreement
Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation	56	86
Being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is not a barrier to success in my organisation	68	89
Cultural background is not a barrier to success in my organisation	76	86
Sexual orientation is not a barrier to success in my organisation	76	75
Disability is not a barrier to success in my organisation	52	71
Age is not a barrier to success in my organisation	56	86

Action Plan

FAIR AND EQUAL RECRUITMENT

According to the People matter survey only 43% of employees believed there was fair and equal recruitment practices. In the focus groups, people believed that there was a history of direct appointments as opposed to advertising positions and undertaking fair recruitment. Although this is believed to have shifted, the focus group participants still felt that unconscious bias and gender stereotypes were influencing recruitment decisions. This section addresses the gender composition at all levels of the workforce, gender pay equity, gendered work segregation and recruitment, and promotion.

	Action	Outcomes	Gender Equality Indicator*
1.1 Andrew	Introduce a performance management system	50% of leadership roles are held by women or gender diverse people	All of them
1.2 Leonie	Collect recruitment demographic data (beyond gender) in a pilot study	Data collection process in place by Aug 2023	1,2,5,7
1.3 Leonie	Conduct an inclusivity and accessibility audit on the organisation with respect to disability	Audit conducted and findings presented to senior executive	1, 6
1.4 Leonie	Develop specific sourcing strategies to access broader and more diverse talent pools	5% of recruits are sourced through these new methods	1,2,3,5,6,7
1.5 Leonie	Annual pay gap reporting	Median pay gap reduced by 2% by June 2022	3

*The workplace gender equality indicators are:

1. gender composition of the workforce
2. gender composition of governing bodies
3. gender pay equity
4. sexual harassment
5. recruitment and promotion
6. leave and flexibility
7. gendered segregation.

Action Plan

LEAVE AND FLEXIBILITY

The People matter survey suggested that employees had access to the flexible work they need but many saw working flexibly as a barrier to career progression. In the focus groups we heard that outdoor workers had only restricted access to flexible work. With these actions we seek to understand the culture in respect to flexible work and address the barriers to uptake. This section addresses the leave and flexibility gender equality indicator.

	Action	Outcomes	Gender Equality Indicator*
2.1 Andrew	Introduction of fact sheets around flexible working for employees and managers	Factsheets created and available on the website by Nov 2022	6
2.2 Janelle	Education program for all employees on creating positive flexible working environments	75% of people managers receive training by June 2023	6
2.3 Andrew	Create more inclusive meeting through business rules and best practice	Rule implemented and communicated by August 2022	6
2.4 Janelle	Hold a forum for casual and part-time employees to seek their perspectives on diversity and inclusion with particular focus on gender equity.	Forums held by Dec 2022	1,4,5,6,7
2.5 Leonie	Review of the parental leave policy	New provisions in the new EBA	1,5,6

*The workplace gender equality indicators are:

1. gender composition of the workforce
2. gender composition of governing bodies
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Action Plan

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AND BEHAVIOUR

The Authority recognises that there are actions we need to take to lift the behavioural standards of our workplace and to create a safe, supportive and welcoming environment to all our employees. This starts with our leaders.

	Action	Outcomes	Gender Equality Indicator*
3.1 Andrew & Exec	Develop a set of values and behavioural expectations	Values and Behaviours established by December 2022	All of them
3.2 Janelle	Inclusive Leadership Training	All leaders have completed training by August 2023	All of them
3.3	Introduce Active Bystander Training	40% of employees have undertaken Active Bystander Training by August 2024	4
3.4	Introduce a person-centred sexual harassment policy	New policy developed and implemented by December 2023	4
3.5	Introduce Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officers (HDCOs)	10 HDCOs trained and operating	4

*The workplace gender equality indicators are:

1. gender composition of the workforce
2. gender composition of governing bodies
3. gender pay equity
4. sexual harassment
5. recruitment and promotion
6. leave and flexibility
7. gendered work segregation.



Acknowledgements

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE OUR
EMPLOYEES WHO WILLINGLY GAVE
OF THEIR TIME TO PROVIDE US
THEIR INSIGHTS AND SHARE THEIR
LIVED EXPERIENCES.**

**OUR THANKS TO BREE GORMAN
CONSULTING FOR CONDUCTING
ASPECTS OF THE CONSULTATION,
COMPLETING OUR DATA ANALYSIS,
FACILITATING OUR CO-DESIGN
WORKSHOP AND PREPARING OUR
DRAFT ACTION PLAN.**



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