



Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2017–2022



DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION

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CEO MESSAGE



I am pleased to present the Gender Equality Action Plan 2017–2022, which forms an important component of our broader workplace diversity and inclusion program.

We value the diversity of thought, experience and perspective that all of our people bring to the Bureau.

To develop this plan we conducted a comprehensive diversity diagnostic and consultation with staff at all levels, which identified a number of challenges. This plan addresses these challenges.

To ensure success we will focus our efforts on:

- **Inclusive culture:** building a culture where employees feel a sense of belonging and are valued for their unique contributions.
- **Gender diversity:** our leaders are visibly and actively committed to gender equality and lead by example. Increasing the representation of women in senior leadership and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) roles is an integral part of this.
- **Flexibility:** flexible work practices are a key lever of diversity and inclusion, and promote gender equality and staff retention. The Bureau recognises the need to promote flexible working arrangements and flexible careers as a business enabler, which motivates and supports a high-performing workforce.

- **Leadership:** our leaders have the mind-set to drive and support this plan and the tools to effectively manage flexibly.
- **Parental support:** ensuring that employees returning from parental leave have access to flexible work arrangements.
- **Measurement:** progressing gender equality requires robust measures and reviews on a regular basis. This evaluation and measurement provides a framework for systemic and sustainable progress. It also provides an opportunity to adjust actions, recognise successes, and hold leaders accountable.

I would like to thank staff who participated in focus groups, interviews and further consultation for their contribution to this plan, which provides a road map towards a more diverse and inclusive work environment that will benefit our people, our customers and our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Dr Andrew Johnson
CEO and Director of Meteorology

OUR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The Bureau strives to be the model of an inclusive culture where diversity of thought and background is valued to provide better outcomes for our people, customers and the community.

We believe diversity of thought and background, together with an inclusive workplace environment, is critical to support every person and team to excel and to enable innovative ways to continuously improve our products and delivery of our services to the Australian community.

We value the diversity of our people and the different viewpoints this brings to help us make better decisions. Diversity means difference and includes, but is not limited to, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, ability or disability, sexual orientation, language, skills, experience, education, industry sector and thinking approaches.

We know that diversity by itself is not enough. To be successful we must create an inclusive environment where our people feel they belong and are valued for their uniqueness, feel respected, and share a sense of fairness. An inclusive work environment is where different voices are respected and heard, diverse viewpoints, perspectives and approaches are valued, and everyone is encouraged to make a unique and meaningful contribution.

The way we bring this to life in the Bureau is:

- Developing and promoting an equitable, respectful and inclusive workplace culture where our people are engaged, are valued for their uniqueness and feel like they belong.
- Bringing together people with different backgrounds and ways of thinking which helps us to drive better decision-making, innovation and overall performance.
- Ensuring we recruit from the broadest talent pool that is reflective of our customers and communities with which we work.
- Supporting the use of flexible work arrangements at all levels to enable our people to balance their personal and professional commitments.

Related links include:

- [Bureau Strategy 2017–2022 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016–2019](#)
- [APS Values and Code of Conduct](#)
- [Reconciliation Action Plan 2016–2019](#)
- [Disability Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2020](#)



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Bureau of Meteorology has served Australians for more than 100 years and is continuing to do so in an increasingly complex and dynamic environment. Whether it is keeping the public safe with our severe weather warnings or providing specialised forecasts to aviation, marine industries, or armed forces in the field, our service offering is constantly changing to keep pace with the changing needs of our customers, as well as science and technology advances.

As an APS agency the Bureau is committed to embracing diversity, drawing on the skills and potential of all employees. By approaching diversity and inclusion from a strategic perspective we give ourselves the best opportunity to succeed. To better understand our current position, an evaluation of existing gender equality practices was undertaken by Diversity Partners in February 2017 from analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, staff feedback and research. The results from this work were used to develop this action plan in alignment with the Bureau Strategy with particular reference to the Bureau Way and staff feedback.

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

There is substantial research showing that:

- Diverse teams are consistently more innovative in their solutions than homogenous teams.
- Co-workers who understand and respect individual differences collaborate more effectively and with less conflict.
- A workforce that's as diverse as its customer/community base can more effectively understand and anticipate diverse needs.
- Inclusive work environments encourage a 'speak up' culture that enables concerns to be addressed constructively.
- Businesses with gender-diverse leadership financially outperform those with less diversity over time. Business benefits emerge most effectively when organisations achieve a critical mass of 30 per cent or more women at senior management.

As at December 2016, women made up 30 per cent of the Bureau's workforce. This is significantly less than the Australian Public Service, where women make up 58 per cent of the total workforce.

While there have been achievements at the Executive Level in achieving gender balance, women are underrepresented in the organisation leadership cohort (comprising Executive Level 2 Upper to Senior Executive Service classification levels). The three largest job roles (also known as job families) within the Bureau; Observations, Engineering and Technical; ICT; and Weather Forecasting have the lowest female representation. Women are predominantly represented in corporate support areas of Administration, Communications and Marketing and People related job roles.

Like the APS, flexible work arrangements at the Bureau are accessed primarily by women. Just over ten per cent of the Bureau's workforce is part-time, which is significantly less than the rest of the APS. Only a small percentage of Bureau male staff access part-time hours and few staff, male or female, in the leadership cohort utilise flexible working arrangements.

The Bureau recognises the case for change, and is committed to developing a progressive and comprehensive approach to achieving a more diverse and inclusive workplace. As the APS Gender Equality Strategy states: 'without recognising gender equality as a business imperative, agencies risk being left behind.'

Some statistics of note for the Bureau include (as of December 2016):

- Women make up 30 per cent of the Bureau's workforce
- The Executive team has 50/50 gender balance
- The three largest Bureau job families have the lowest female representation: 14 per cent Observations, Engineering and Technical; 19 per cent ICT and 31 per cent Weather Forecasting
- Women make up 21 per cent of the Organisation Leadership job roles
- Women are predominately represented in support job roles: 73 per cent Administration; 65 per cent Communications and Marketing; and 50 per cent People
- 10.3 per cent of the Bureau's workforce is part time, compared to the broader APS at 20.1 per cent
- Five per cent of Bureau male employees access part-time arrangements
- Four per cent of women and two per cent of men in the Bureau's leadership cohort access part-time hours.

COMMITTING TO CHANGE

Delivering the Bureau's Gender Equality Action Plan will require that leaders are bold in creating an inclusive workplace culture; that leaders commit to allocating resources to ensure gender-equality actions are implemented; and that leaders at all levels are accountable for driving gender equality in the Bureau.

Further, success will only be achieved when every person is responsible for their own actions and behaviours, and for treating everyone with equality and respect.

FOCUS AREAS:

The following four key focus areas will drive the Bureau's Gender Equality Action Plan 2017–2022:

1. **Inclusive culture:** Develop and promote an equitable, respectful and inclusive workplace culture
2. **Gender diversity:** Reach parity in the representation of women in the organisation and increase the number of women in senior leadership and STEM
3. **Flexibility:** Increase and promote the opportunity to access flexible work arrangements by all staff
4. **Measuring progress:** Establish a governance mechanism to track diversity and inclusion commitments, actions, measures and benefits.

These focus areas will link to our organisation's development in a number of ways including:

- The Bureau Strategy, particularly Strategic Action 4.5. *"Implement a whole-of-enterprise diversity and inclusion plan that enables gender equity and diversity at all levels in the organisation"*
- Through our leadership group as champions of this plan and the development of leadership competencies in our next generation leaders
- In our management practices through coaching and facilitation of team effectiveness through diversity and inclusion
- Our culture, in particular the implementation of "the Bureau Way", and
- Our systems and procedures for accessing flexible work options and development opportunities and our staff are satisfied they are being treated fairly and equally.

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN AT A GLANCE

The Bureau Way: One enterprise, that is safe and diverse, where our people grow and are empowered to excel, and where our customers come first, trust us and consider that we are a pleasure to work with.

Strategic objectives	1. Inclusive culture: develop and promote an equitable, respectful and inclusive workplace culture	2. Gender diversity: increase the representation of women in leadership and STEM roles	3. Flexibility: increase the access and opportunity to use flexible work arrangements at all levels	4. Measure progress: Establish a governance mechanism to track diversity and inclusion commitments, actions, measures and benefits
Why it's important	<p>We recognise that employees perform best when they feel a sense of belonging and feel valued for their unique contributions.</p> <p>We want to be reflective of the Australian community, so we can more accurately anticipate the product needs and services required of our customers.</p> <p>Diversity of thought helps to provide novel solutions for our customers and organisation.</p>	<p>Workplace gender equality is associated with increased organisational performance; enhanced ability to attract and retain talented employees; and enhanced organisational reputation.</p>	<p>Flexible work practices help attract and retain employees from diverse backgrounds, and support our people at different stages of the employee life cycle.</p>	<p>Provides a framework for systemic and sustainable progress.</p> <p>Provides an opportunity to adjust strategy, recognise successes, and hold leaders accountable.</p>
Key initiatives	<p>1.1 Increase awareness through education and communication.</p> <p>1.2 Build inclusive leadership capability and accountability (including recognising and challenging unconscious bias).</p> <p>1.3 Embed gender equality, diversity and inclusion in employment practices.</p>	<p>2.1 Parity in the representation of women in the organisation and an increase the proportion of women in leadership positions.</p> <p>2.2 Increase the proportion of women in STEM roles.</p>	<p>3.1 Provide flexible work arrangements that meet employee needs and operational requirements.</p> <p>3.2 Provide education and resources.</p> <p>3.3 Enhance parental leave return to work processes.</p>	<p>4.1 Establish a reference group/committee to oversee progress on the action plan.</p> <p>4.2 Develop a diversity dashboard for the Bureau.</p>

Underpinned by our values and behaviours: safety, customer focus, passion and tenacity, responsibility, humility, integrity

DETAILED GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Key result area	Objective	Action	Lead accountability and responsibility	Timeline	Business benefit
1. Inclusive culture: develop and promote an equitable, respectful and inclusive workplace culture	1.1 Increase awareness through education and communication	1.1.1 Develop a communications plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotes the Bureau’s commitment to diversity and inclusion to internal and external audiences. • articulates the business benefits of diversity and inclusion to the Bureau. • encourages Bureau employees at all levels to be accountable for supporting a diverse and inclusive culture. 	General Manager Organisational Development General Manager Communications	Developed by January 2018 Updated annually	A culture of respect, diversity and inclusivity where all staff can meet their full potential and contribute to enhanced business productivity.
		1.1.2 Communicate the business benefits and Bureau commitment for diversity and inclusion, including gender equality, across the organisation. Focus on inclusion and diversity of approaches, thinking styles and background.	Executive Champion Gender Equality Executive Senior Leadership Team Gender Equality Reference Group	Ongoing	
		1.1.3 Ensure all forums the Bureau hosts, participates in or sponsors takes gender balance into account.	Executive Senior Leadership Team Employees	Ongoing	
		1.1.4 Develop, promote and participate in an annual diversity and STEM calendar of significant events.	General Manager Organisational Development Executive Senior Leadership Team Gender Equality Reference Group Employees	Developed annually in January	
		1.1.5. Create and support employee-led initiatives and groups that support our diversity and inclusion goals, including leveraging existing women and STEM networks.	General Manager Organisational Development Executive Senior Leadership Team Gender Equality Reference Group Employees	Ongoing	

Key result area	Objective	Action	Lead accountability and responsibility	Timeline	Business benefit
		1.1.6 Refresh the Bureau's careers website to promote STEM careers and the Bureau's commitment to diversity and inclusion.	General Manager Organisational Development General Manager Organisational Development General Manager Application Services	Completed by December 2018	
	1.2 Build inclusive leadership capability and accountability (including challenging unconscious bias)	1.2.1 Bureau senior leadership team will participate in Inclusive Leadership and Unconscious Bias training programs.	Senior Leadership Team	Ongoing Delivered annually	
		1.2.2 Inclusive leadership competency integrated with Bureau training curriculum.	General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by September 2020	
		1.2.3 Provide training for employees on unconscious bias and using inclusive language and behaviours in the workplace.	General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by September 2020	
		1.2.4 Refresh training and resources for selection panel participants to reduce unconscious bias in the recruitment process; with selection panel chairs ensuring panel members complete updated training.	General Manager Organisational Development Selection Panel Chairs and Panel Members	Completed by September 2018	
		1.2.5 Include a Diversity and Inclusion performance measure in senior leaders Performance Plan.	General Manager Organisational Development Senior Leadership Team	Annually Aligned with performance development cycle	
	1.3 Embed gender equality, diversity and inclusion in employment practices	1.3.1 Review recruitment advertising and position descriptions to ensure inclusive wording to attract a broader candidate pool.	General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by June 2018	
		1.3.2 Review recruitment processes and provide guidance to selection panels to reduce the potential for biases and actively seek broader candidate pools.	General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by June 2019	

Key result area	Objective	Action	Lead accountability and responsibility	Timeline	Business benefit
		1.3.3 Ensure selection panels are gender-diverse.	Selection Panel Chairs General Manager Organisational Development	Ongoing	
		1.3.4 Conduct exit surveys and analyse reasons for voluntary turnover to inform retention strategies.	General Manager Organisational Development	Ongoing Annual analysis of exit data	
		1.3.5 Apply a diversity and inclusion lens to succession and development planning and promotion processes including mobility opportunities.	General Manager Organisational Development	Ongoing	
		1.3.6 Develop and communicate a domestic and family violence policy.	General Manager Organisation Development	Completed by December 2017	
2. Gender diversity: Increase the representation of women in leadership and STEM roles	2.1 Increase the percentage of women in leadership positions	2.1.1 Set pipeline targets for the percentage of women in leadership and STEM roles.	Executive Champion Gender Equality Executive General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by September 2017 Targets reviewed annually	Business productivity improvements that result from building a gender diverse organisation particularly focused on our leadership and STEM roles.
		2.1.2 Adopt a gender balanced approach to leadership development opportunities such as mentoring, shadowing, rotations, secondments, networks and specific leadership programs.	General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by September 2020	
	2.2 Increase the percentage of women in STEM job families	2.2.1 Explore and engage in STEM focused recruitment initiatives across the APS, including graduate and entry-level programs.	General Manager Organisational Development	Ongoing	
		2.2.2 Develop and implement a framework and plan and drawing on a cohort of Bureau STEM mentors/champions to participate in outreach activities.	General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	Framework and plan completed by September 2018	

Key result area	Objective	Action	Lead accountability and responsibility	Timeline	Business benefit
3. Flexibility: increase the access and opportunity to use flexible work arrangements at all levels	3.1 Provide flexible work arrangements that meet employee needs and business requirement	3.1.1 Research available options; establish pilots and policies for new and innovative types of flexible working and implement a 'reason neutral' framework and streamlined process.	General Manager Organisational Development General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	Completed by December 2018	A flexible, mobile and productive workforce that provides the organisational support and resources to enable everyone one, at all stages in their life, to be engaged and productive and have a fulfilling role.
		3.1.2 Communicate success stories on flexible working.	Executive Champion Gender Equality General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	Completed by December 2018	
		3.2 Provide education and resources	3.2.1 Provide toolkits to support flexible work arrangements.	General Manager Organisational Development	
	3.2.2 Leaders actively model and promote flexible working.		Executive Champion Gender Equality Executive All Managers	Ongoing	
	3.2.3 Promote access to flexible working arrangements during recruitment and onboarding. Classify positions as full-time/part-time as default.		General Manager Organisation Development All Managers	Ongoing	
	3.3 Enhance parental leave return to work processes	3.3.1 Implement a post parental leave return to work framework for parents.	General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	Completed by December 2018	
			3.3.2 Promote and encourage men to use parental leave provisions and access flexible working.	Executive All Managers General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	

Key result area	Objective	Action	Lead accountability and responsibility	Timeline	Business benefit
		3.3.3 Review funding of parental leave and establish enterprise approach to parental leave.	Executive General Manager Organisational Development	Completed by December 2017	
4. Measure progress: Establish a governance mechanism to track diversity and inclusion commitments, actions, measures and benefits	4.1 Establish a reference group to oversee progress on the strategy	4.1.1 Continue the consultative process applied to develop the Gender Equality Action Plan to establish a reference group chaired by the SES Gender Equality Sponsor to provide strategic oversight.	Executive Champion Gender Equality General Manager Organisational Development Employees	Completed by December 2017	Our progress in this strategy is measured and managed, compared to our benchmarks and focused on adjustments to obtain continuous improvement towards out goals.
	4.2 Develop a diversity dashboard for the Bureau	4.2.1 Agree on metrics and reporting to measure and monitor on progress.	Executive Champion Gender Equality Executive General Manager Organisational Development Gender Equality Reference Group	Completed by January 2018	
		4.2.2 Develop diversity dashboard report and include in the Executive dashboard reporting.	General Manager Organisational Development Manager Enterprise Business Systems	Completed by June 2018	
		4.2.3 Commit to regular reporting of workforce diversity data.	General Manager Organisational Development	Ongoing Annually	

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED BY:

Strategic objective (Key result area)	Key measures	Current 2017 baseline 30 June 2017	Goal 2022
1. Inclusive culture: develop and promote an equitable, respectful and inclusive workplace culture	Leader participation rate in diversity and inclusion training Monitor changes in organisational culture through the annual APS employee census including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of acceptance/inclusivity of diversity • Extent of diversity as a barrier to career development. 	61% of the senior leadership team have completed training in Inclusive Leadership and Unconscious Bias 2017 APS employee census data including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic data • Commitment level to inclusion and diversity • Workplace culture of respect • Satisfaction with career progression • Barriers to career development • Bullying and harassment rates • Differences in response rates for all genders Outcomes of the Organisation Development Blueprint staff survey	100% for the Senior Leadership Team by 2018 and then ongoing for new members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive trend in APS employee census data questions outlined • Positive trend in levels of staff satisfaction
2. Gender diversity: increase the representation of women in leadership and STEM roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender composition in the total workforce • Gender composition of the Executive • Gender composition of the Senior Leadership Team • Representation of women in STEM job roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32% women in total workforce • 57% women in the Executive • 27% women in Senior Leadership Team • 18% of staff in STEM roles are women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women represent 50% of the total workforce • Women represent 40% of our Senior Leadership Team • Women represent 30% of our STEM job roles

**Strategic objective
(Key result area)**

Key measures

**Current 2017 baseline
30 June 2017**

Goal 2022

3. Flexibility: increase the access and opportunity to use flexible work arrangements at all levels

- Monitor Bureau HR data on the number of employees utilising formal flexible working arrangements
- Monitor employee satisfaction with accessing flexible working by gender

- 7% of our male staff and 21% of our female staff access formal flexible working arrangements
- 1.5% of men and 4% women in our leadership cohort access formal flexible working arrangements
- Monitor 2017 APS employee census data on:
 - Types of flexible working arrangements accessed
 - Percentage of employees accessing flexible working arrangements
 - Level of employees satisfied with their flexible working arrangements and work-life balance
 - Employee reasons for not using flexible working arrangements
 - Bureau HR data on number of employees currently utilising formal flexibility options
 - Bureau HR data on staff retention

- Positive trend in the utilisation of flexible working options
- Positive trend in the retention of ongoing staff
- Positive trend in the retention of women in ongoing roles
- Positive trend in the number and gender balance of staff satisfied with flexible working options

Outcomes of the Organisation Development Blueprint staff survey

REFERENCES

Bureau Strategy 2017–2022

Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016–2019

APS Values and Code of Conduct

Reconciliation Action Plan 2016–2019

Disability Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2020

ABS 2011 Australian Census

ABS 2016 Australian Census

Contact Us

For any enquiries related to the Bureau's Gender Equality Action Plan please contact the Diversity and Inclusion team at diversity@bom.gov.au



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