The Departments of the Parliament (Victoria)

Gender Equality Action Plan

2026 – 2029

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Section 1: Insights from previous gender equality work

Over the life of the 2022 Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), several learnings have emerged that have directly informed the approach taken in the current GEAP. These insights reflect what has been effective in achieving progress, as well as what has been constrained by the unique operational and governance context of the parliamentary environment.

A key learning was the value of an ambitious first plan to establish momentum and a shared focus across the parliamentary departments. The initial GEAP set a clear direction and accelerated early action, particularly where improvements could be implemented through strengthened governance, refreshed or new policies and clearer reporting mechanisms. This demonstrated a visible leadership commitment and formal accountability in supporting gender equality outcomes as essential foundations for sustained change.

At the same time, implementation experience showed that some aspirational actions were not feasible or best placed within the GEAP, particularly where actions intersected with factors outside the departments' direct control (for example, legislative change) or where accountability was more appropriately embedded in leadership roles and existing governance structures. This reinforced the importance of designing strategies that are proportionate, clearly owned, and aligned with decision-making pathways to ensure reforms are practical and can be embedded into business-as-usual.

The Parliamentary precincts' multi-employer environment also surfaced a critical insight: preventing and responding to sexual harassment requires approaches that recognise complex stakeholder and power dynamics, and the limits of applying consistent employment-based controls across all individuals in the workplace. This has informed an increased emphasis on clear expectations of conduct, accessible reporting and support pathways (including independent options), and capability-building for leaders, managers and human resources to respond consistently and safely.

The departments also identified limitations in the use of fixed numerical diversity targets within a small workforce characterised by low recruitment volumes, limited turnover and episodic change linked to election cycles and organisational restructure. In this context, small numerical shifts can reflect timing effects rather than systemic change. As a result, the GEAP has placed greater emphasis on measures that influence workforce experience, safety and inclusion, supported by qualitative and contextual evidence alongside workforce metrics.

Finally, implementation highlighted the impact of data capability and maturity on what can be measured and reported meaningfully and ethically. Fragmented workforce systems and reliance on point-in-time, voluntary census data limit trend analysis and can be influenced by disclosure confidence. This has informed a focus on strengthening data integrity over time, including through planned human capital management system uplift, while continuing to use staff feedback, risk indicators and contextual analysis to inform action in the interim.

Section 2: Processes, record keeping and governance

The parliamentary departments have established processes, record keeping and governance arrangements to support GEAP delivery and to embed accountability, transparent decision making and measurable progress across the precincts.

Clear governance arrangements are in place through the GEAP Working Group, which operates under endorsed Terms of Reference and provides a structured, cross-departmental forum to coordinate implementation, monitor progress and develop recommendations for consideration by the Parliamentary Executive Group (PEG). Oversight of GEAP implementation is reinforced by embedding GEAP reporting as a standing agenda item for PEG, with reporting through to the Presiding Officers. These arrangements provide clear pathways for escalation, decision-making and accountability, and ensure progress is regularly reviewed at senior levels.

To support continuity and transparency, record keeping practices have been implemented to document actions, decisions and key discussions. Meeting agendas, records and updates are maintained and made accessible to all staff via the intranet, supporting organisational memory, enabling consistent follow through, and providing an evidence base for evaluation and reporting.

Delivery is supported by clear prioritisation and an implementation approach that integrates GEAP work into business-as-usual systems. Progress is tracked through regular data review and reporting (including staff census insights, gender pay gap analysis and other workforce monitoring), alongside structured action planning in response to staff feedback (for example, People Matter Survey action plans). This strengthens the organisation's ability to measure progress in a way that is meaningful for a small workforce and supports targeted interventions where required.

These arrangements also support managers by clarifying expectations, reinforcing leadership ownership and enabling consistent workforce practices through policy, guidance and capability initiatives. Collectively, the established processes, record-keeping and governance arrangements provide a stable foundation for sustained GEAP implementation and continuous improvement over time.

Section 3: Leadership commitment

Leaders in the parliamentary departments demonstrate a clear and active commitment to gender equality through visible sponsorship, formal accountability and sustained focus on embedding gender equality into core governance, workforce policies and everyday leadership practice.

Gender equality is championed through the Parliamentary Executive Group (PEG), with GEAP reporting embedded as a standing agenda item and reporting through to the Presiding Officers. This oversight ensures progress is monitored at the most senior levels, with leaders receiving regular updates, considering risks and barriers, and supporting decisions that keep GEAP priorities on track. Leaders have also endorsed clear governance arrangements to coordinate delivery across the parliamentary departments, including Terms of Reference for the cross departmental GEAP Working Group. While the Working Group is not a decision-making body, it provides an established mechanism for collaboration, feedback and advice to PEG, ensuring leadership decisions are informed by workforce insights and practical implementation experience.

Leadership commitment is also demonstrated through strengthening the policy and reporting foundations that support safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces. Leaders have supported the introduction of an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Commitment Statement and reinforced expectations of conduct through updated respectful workplace and inappropriate behaviour frameworks. They have also supported improvements to reporting pathways, including access to independent and anonymous options, recognising that confidence in systems and decision-makers is critical within a complex parliamentary environment.

A further expression of leadership commitment is the prioritisation of capability uplift. Leaders have backed programs to build consistent people management capability aligned to GEAP expectations, including the People Managers Essentials Program and the Emerging Leaders Program. This investment further builds manager skillsets to apply policies fairly, intervene early, respond appropriately to inappropriate behaviour, and reinforce a culture of respect and inclusion in day-to-day decision making.

Leaders have also supported strengthened monitoring and transparency, including regular data review and reporting (such as staff census insights and gender pay gap analysis) to inform targeted action. This enables the organisation to track progress, identify emerging risks and focus effort where it will have the greatest impact.

Collectively, these arrangements demonstrate a sustained leadership commitment to gender equality through clear expectations, embedded governance and accountability, and support for implementation as a core leadership responsibility across the parliamentary departments.

Section 4: Consultation groups

Group	Confirmed yes or no	If no, why not?
Governing body (if your organisation has one)	N/A	Not applicable
Employees	Yes	
Employee representatives, including relevant trade unions	Yes	Copy of the final draft GEAP shared, noting that focus groups and consultation sessions included invitations to participate to all employee representatives and those who represented relevant unions
Other relevant people	Yes	Leadership team and Executive

Section 5: Consultation process

Consultation to support development of the new GEAP included a structured program of focus groups, consultation with employee representatives, and engagement with leadership and executive governance forums to ensure both staff voice and decision-maker input informed priorities and the engagement of a specialist consultancy group to support the development of the new plan and to facilitate the focus groups to mitigate bias and to ensure employee voices and experiences were reflected.

Following this initial consultation, the draft GEAP was published on the staff intranet and circulated to all employees and employee representatives for further review and feedback, with submissions invited via a Microsoft Forms survey, prior to final review and endorsement by Executive.

Staff focus groups were the primary mechanism used to consult with employees about workplace experience, workplace gender audit findings were presented and discussed to support informed discussion and to test emerging themes for action in the parliamentary precincts' unique multi-employer environment. Sessions were designed to encourage frank discussion in a safe setting and were conducted using consistent discussion prompts so themes could be compared across groups while still allowing participants to raise issues specific to their work context.

Discussion topics explored practical enablers and barriers to gender equality, including respectful workplace culture and safety, confidence in reporting and response pathways, leadership and manager capability, and workforce practices across recruitment, progression and flexible work.

Senior leaders were consulted to provide strategic input on workplace gender audit findings and proposed priorities, and to support alignment with broader organisational priorities, and confirm implementation feasibility. This included consideration through established governance structures (including the Parliamentary Executive Group and the GEAP Working Group's advisory and coordination role), enabling executive oversight of key themes emerging from consultation and the proposed focus of the plan. Leadership consultation informed decisions regarding accountability, resourcing, implementation responsibilities, and monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Insights from the focus groups were consolidated into overarching themes and triangulated with existing workforce information (including staff survey insights and other relevant data) to shape the GEAP's priorities, strategies and measures. Outcomes from each stage of consultation—including staff focus groups, leadership engagement and feedback on the draft GEAP—were used to further refine the plan prior to Executive endorsement.

This consultation and analysis approach ensures the GEAP is informed by lived experience, grounded in evidence, and supported by leadership commitment through governance arrangements that enable clear decision-making, accountability and ongoing oversight.

Section 6: Findings from consultation

Consultation enabled participants to contextualise the Workplace Gender Audit findings by describing the workplace conditions and practices that sit behind the data. Audit results indicate overall gender balance across the workforce and senior leadership, lower uptake of part-time work by men, and ongoing occupational segregation across role types. Consultation assisted in explaining how these patterns are influenced by role design, cultural expectations, workload structures and the limited visibility of flexible leadership pathways within the parliamentary environment.

In relation to workplace safety, audit data indicates a gap between anonymous experiences of sexual harassment and formal reporting. Consultation identified a range of barriers to reporting, including power imbalances within parliamentary settings, concerns about confidentiality, fear of reputational or career impacts, and low confidence that reporting would result in timely or consistent outcomes. Participants also described the presence of everyday gendered behaviours and variable understanding and engagement with gender equality initiatives across teams and work areas.

Consultation further highlighted how these issues intersect and reinforce one another. Participants described a perceived association between progression and full-time availability, limited access to job-share and part-time leadership pathways, and uneven visibility of leaders who work flexibly. In relation to sexual harassment, consultation clarified that the gap between anonymous experience (6% of women in 2025) and formal reporting (no formal reports) reflects barriers to reporting rather than an absence of risk or harm. Across themes, participants identified everyday gendered behaviours, including casual sexism and the disproportionate allocation of low-visibility or administrative work, and noted uneven participation in gender equality initiatives, with some male-dominated areas perceived as less engaged.

Overall, consultation strengthened the departments' understanding of audit findings by translating quantitative indicators into practical, context-specific insights about workplace experience. It highlighted areas where policy settings and formal processes do not consistently align with lived experience (for example, formal versus informal flexibility and perceptions of fairness versus actual practice), as well as areas where additional data, communication or capability support is required, including improved collection of intersectional identity information. These insights informed the prioritisation and refinement of GEAP strategies by focusing on underlying drivers of inequality, including strengthening shared governance and executive sponsorship, building leadership and manager capability, improving confidence in reporting and response pathways, embedding clearer accountability mechanisms, and strengthening flexible work frameworks so that progression is not implicitly linked to full-time work. This supports a more targeted GEAP and more consistent implementation across the parliamentary departments.

Section 7: Gender equality principles

In developing the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026–2029, the parliamentary departments applied the gender equality principles by grounding priorities in audit evidence, consultation findings and analysis of workforce systems and structures. Development of the GEAP was informed by the Workplace Gender Audit and consultation with employees and leaders, ensuring that strategies respond to identified issues including occupational segregation, access to flexible work, representation at senior levels, and barriers to reporting and addressing sexual harassment within the parliamentary environment.

An intersectional approach was applied by recognising that gender inequality can be compounded by other factors, including race, disability, age and sexuality, and by identifying the need to strengthen voluntary identity data to better understand and respond to different workforce experiences. The GEAP reflects shared responsibility and accountability through whole-of-departments governance arrangements, executive oversight and the integration of gender equality objectives into leadership expectations and performance frameworks.

Consistent with prevention-focused principles, the GEAP prioritises capability development and culture-based interventions. This includes mandatory, practical training for leaders and teams (such as inclusive leadership and active bystander training), clearer guidance and resources to support respectful behaviours, and actions to strengthen confidence in reporting pathways through greater transparency and consistency of processes. The GEAP also reflects the principle of substantive equality by addressing structural conditions that enable participation and progression, This includes promoting flexible work at all levels (including job-share and part-time leadership pathways) and reviewing role design and recruitment practices through an intersectional gender lens to reduce bias and remove systemic barriers.

Section 8: Gender pay equity principles

The parliamentary departments have applied gender pay equity principles in developing the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) by using Workplace Gender Audit evidence to identify and respond to pay-related risks, and by adopting a sustained and transparent approach to measurement, monitoring and action. The audit identified a mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group of 6.7% ($9.6k), with variation across classification levels and occupational groups. These findings indicate that pay inequities are driven by structural and systemic factors, rather than individual performance, and require a coordinated, governance-led response.

A key principle reflected in the GEAP is that pay equity depends on the availability of robust, trusted and sufficiently granular data to support analysis and decision making. The GEAP therefore prioritises strengthening baseline systems and processes to support more accurate and consistent measurement of pay gaps over time. This includes improving the quality of remuneration data, applying an intersectional lens to analysis where possible, and increasing voluntary self-reporting of identity information to enable pay equity outcomes to be assessed across different cohorts while maintaining privacy and confidentiality. This approach recognises that aggregate gender pay gap measures can obscure inequities experienced by particular groups and may not fully capture the drivers of disparity within a small workforce.

The GEAP reflects the principle that pay equity is an ongoing governance and workforce management issue, rather than a one-off compliance activity. Commitments to regular analysis and reporting of pay gap outcomes support transparency, accountability and informed decision-making. Ongoing reporting enables progress to be tracked, emerging risks to be identified, and actions to be refined where required, including in response to changes in workforce composition, recruitment activity or classification distribution.

Consistent with prevention-focused principles, the GEAP prioritises strengthening remuneration governance and decision-making processes to minimise the risk of bias over time. This includes clearer articulation of remuneration principles, stronger oversight of starting salaries, progression and allowances, and alignment between pay equity actions and broader workforce strategies such as recruitment, promotion, workforce planning and occupational segregation.

By embedding pay equity considerations into established systems and governance arrangements, the parliamentary departments support fair and consistent remuneration outcomes that are sustainable over the life of the GEAP.

Section 9: Intersectionality

The parliamentary departments have taken intersectional gender inequality into account in developing the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) by recognising that gendered experiences and outcomes are shaped by other factors, including race, disability, age, sexuality, gender diversity and caring responsibilities. Audit evidence and consultation findings indicate that risks and barriers are not evenly distributed across teams, levels and role types, and that gender inequality can be compounded where these factors intersect.

Consultation reinforced these findings by providing insight into lived experience. Some participants disclosed intersectional experiences of disadvantage, while others noted limited confidence, capability or literacy to raise issues that sit at the intersection of sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism and other forms of discrimination. These insights highlighted both the presence of intersectional risk and the need to strengthen organisational capability, confidence and evidence to identify and respond to compounded disadvantage in a consistent and proportionate way.

In response, the GEAP strengthens the evidence base required to identify intersectional inequality. This includes actions to improve employee trust and voluntary self-reporting of identity information, supported by clear communication about purpose, use and privacy protections. Strengthening identity data enables analysis beyond headline gender metrics and supports more targeted, proportionate strategies, while recognising the constraints of small cohort sizes and disclosure confidence.

Intersectionality is reflected in the design of actions across the GEAP. The plan proposes applying an intersectional lens to recruitment and promotion processes to identify and reduce structural bias, including accessibility barriers for people with disability. It also includes actions to strengthen leader capability to build culturally safe and inclusive teams, and to review flexible work frameworks and role design so that flexibility supports diverse needs and circumstances, including caring responsibilities.
The GEAP further acknowledges the parliamentary context, where gender and inclusion issues can be politicised and where multiple employing authorities operate within shared workplaces. Accordingly, the plan emphasises clear governance arrangements, consistent implementation

and leader accountability to ensure that approaches to intersectional inclusion are practical, credible and sustained across the parliamentary departments over the life of the GEAP.

Section 10: Case for change and vision

Gender equality is a priority across the parliamentary departments because it is fundamental to fairness, safety and equal access to opportunity, and because it supports organisational capability in a complex, high-visibility parliamentary environment. The Workplace Gender Audit and consultation findings indicate that equality cannot be assumed from overall workforce gender balance alone; it must be assessed across key indicators including as senior representation, pay equity, workplace safety and reporting confidence, recruitment and promotion outcomes, access to flexibility and caring supports, and occupational segregation.

Analysis of these indicators highlights a number of persistent structural and cultural patterns. These include declining representation of women at middle classification-levels, a measurable gender pay gap, gendered norms relating to caring and flexible work, and a gap between experiences of sexual harassment and formal reporting. While these issues vary in scale and impact, together they point to areas where existing systems, practices and norms continue to shape unequal outcomes.

Addressing these issues is consistent with core gender equality principles. This includes substantive equality, by focusing on removing structural barriers rather than assuming equal treatment produces equal outcomes; prevention and safety, by reducing the risk of gendered harm and strengthening confidence in reporting and response pathways; intersectionality, by recognising that gender inequality can be compounded by other forms of disadvantage and improving the evidence base to understand differential impacts; and accountability and transparency, through clear governance arrangements, leadership responsibility and ongoing monitoring and reporting of progress.

The GEAP responds to these issues by prioritising system-level change, governance and capability development, rather than isolated or short-term interventions. The plan strengthen the foundations required for sustained progress, including consistent leadership oversight, embedded accountability, improved data and reporting, and practical workforce strategies that support equitable participation, progression and safety across the parliamentary departments.

Vision for gender equality
A parliamentary workplace, reflective of the diverse Victorian community where all people—of all genders and backgrounds—are safe, respected and able to thrive; where leadership, opportunity and reward are equitable at every level; where flexible and sustainable work is normalised and does not limit progression; where pay equity is monitored and maintained; and where harmful behaviour is prevented, addressed consistently, and addressed consistently

Section 11: Identifying underlying causes of gender inequality

Analysis of the Workplace Gender Audit results and consultation findings indicates that gender inequality across the parliamentary departments is influenced by a set of interrelated structural, cultural and system-level factors. These include:

Structural power imbalances in the parliamentary environment
Employees work closely with individuals who are not subject to the departments' employment frameworks, including individuals (for example Members) over whom the organisation does not have line-management authority or consistent disciplinary, performance or training levers. This limits the effectiveness of traditional employment-based prevention and response mechanisms and uniquely complicates the application of consistent standards of behaviour. These structural constraints increase reliance on governance, leadership capability and clear behavioural expectations to prevent and respond to gendered behaviour and sexual harassment.

Low trust and practical barriers in reporting systems
A gap between anonymous experiences of inappropriate behaviour and formal reporting reflects a range of barriers, including fear of repercussions, reputational risk, potential public exposure, uncertainty about confidentiality and perceptions of slow, inconsistent or ineffective responses. Past high-profile incidents and the complexity of reporting pathways within a parliamentary setting have further affected confidence in systems. These factors can discourage reporting, reduce visibility of risk and limit the organisation's ability to respond early and effectively

Gendered norms about work and leadership
Progression is commonly perceived to be linked to full-time availability, extended hours and constant visibility. This disproportionately affects employees with caring responsibilities, most often women, and is reinforced by the limited availability and visibility of formal job-share and part-time leadership roles. These norms can influence individual choices, leading some employees to increase hours beyond sustainable levels and others to self-select out of progression opportunities, contributing to cumulative disadvantage over time.

Role design and workload expectations
Certain senior and sitting-related roles are perceived to require hours beyond standard full-time arrangements and involve unpredictable or late work. These expectations can constrain participation and reduce access to senior roles for employees with caring responsibilities or other commitments. Where role design and workload expectations are not reviewed through an equity lens, they can unintentionally reinforce gendered impacts and limit the effectiveness of flexible work policies.

Occupational segregation and gendered team cultures
Persistent gender concentration within particular divisions and occupational groupings (for example, technical and operational roles compared with clerical and corporate roles compared to clerical roles) reflects historical workforce patterns, recruitment pipelines and occupational stereotypes. These concentrations influence team cultures, behavioural norms and access to development opportunities, and limit diverse pipelines into senior and specialist roles. Over time, occupational segregation contributes to gender pay gaps and uneven representation in leadership roles.

Inconsistent recruitment, promotion and development practices
Perceptions of unfairness in recruitment and promotion processes, including access to acting opportunities, higher duties and secondments, undermine confidence in merit-based systems. Variability in panel composition, assessment approaches and decision-making practices can embed bias and create barriers, including accessibility barriers for people with disability. Where transparency and consistency are limited, cumulative advantage can develop, shaping unequal career outcomes.

Unequal distribution of low-visibility work
Consultation indicates that women are more likely to undertake low-visibility or “office housekeeping” work, such as coordination, organising, relationship management and minute-taking. This work is often informal, expected and not formally recognised in workload allocation or performance frameworks. Over time, disproportionate allocation of low-visibility work can limit access to higher-value, career-advancing opportunities and reinforce gendered patterns of contribution and recognition.

Limited intersectional safety and literacy
Low confidence to raise issues at the intersection of gender with racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia or ageism suggests gaps in inclusion capability, psychological safety and organisational literacy. These gaps can obscure intersectional risks and limit the organisation’s ability to identify and respond to compounded disadvantage. Limited data further constrains understanding of how different cohorts experience workplace systems and practices.

Variable engagement, backlash and resistance
Inconsistent participation in gender equality initiatives, alongside emerging resistance or backlash, can slow implementation and dilute impact. Where gender equality efforts are perceived as optional or peripheral, progress can become uneven across teams and work areas. This variability reinforces the importance of consistent leadership messaging, accountability and integration of gender equality into core governance and workforce practices.

Section 12: Analysis of data and documentation of strategies

Indicator 1: Gender composition of all levels of the workforce

Critical performance measures:

- Gender composition of the duty holder organisation in 2025: Workforce: 49.9% women / 50.1% men
- Gender composition of part-time workers in the duty holder organisation in 2025:13.2% women vs 5.3% men; limited senior part-time roles.
- Gender composition of senior leaders in the duty holder organisation in 2025: Senior leaders: 50% women (5W:5M) (note reporting error in CGEPS data in 2025 where employees who were classified as grade 7 and counted in this measure but are not part of the Senior Leadership team).

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified a set of interrelated, system-level gender inequality issues across the parliamentary departments. While overall workforce composition and senior leadership representation indicate areas of relative strength, the audit demonstrates that persistent structural, cultural and experiential factors continue to shape unequal outcomes for women and men.

Gender pay gaps persist, particularly in total remuneration
The audit identified both mean and median gender pay gaps, with larger disparities evident at lower classification levels and within certain occupational groups. These gaps are influenced by structural factors including classification distribution, occupational segregation, starting salary practices and access to allowances and progression opportunities, rather than individual performance.

Sexual harassment is under-reported

A measurable proportion of respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment, yet only a small fraction indicated they had made formal reports. No matters were recorded as formal reports to Human Resources or to Executive. This disparity indicates a confidence and trust gap in reporting mechanisms and organisational response, rather than an absence of risk or harm.

Perceptions of unfairness in recruitment and promotion persist
While recruitment and promotion outcomes are relatively balanced numerically, women are less likely than men to perceive these processes as fair. This points to issues with transparency, consistency and confidence in decision making processes, which may affect engagement and career progression.

Gendered patterns of leave and flexible work continue
Women take substantially longer periods of parental leave than men, and formal uptake of flexible work arrangements remains low across all genders. These patterns reinforce unequal caring responsibilities and contribute to downstream impacts on career continuity, progression and remuneration.

Occupational segregation remains evident
Men are over-represented in managerial and technical roles, while women are over-represented in clerical and administrative roles. This segregation limits career mobility narrows occupational pipelines and contributes to leadership imbalance and pay gaps.

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit demonstrates that gender inequality within the parliamentary departments is primarily driven by entrenched systems, structures and workplace norms. Addressing these issues requires coordinated, long-term action focused on governance, workforce design, capability development, workplace safety and data transparency, rather than isolated or short-term interventions.

Drawing on the findings, these identified a set of interrelated gender inequality problems across all seven workplace gender equality indicators. While overall workforce outcomes show areas of strength, the data highlights persistent structural and experiential inequalities that require targeted, systems-based responses.

Conclusion
Overall, the audit indicates that gender inequality within the parliamentary departments is driven primarily by structural, cultural and system-level factors rather than overt exclusion. While headline workforce composition is broadly balanced, the audit highlights persistent risks and experience gaps across the indicators, including pay equity, workplace safety and reporting confidence, recruitment and progression perceptions, utilisation of flexible work, and occupational segregation. Addressing these issues requires coordinated, sustained action that strengthens governance, capability and consistency in workforce practices, supported by improved data integrity and transparent monitoring over the life of the GEAP.

Measures	**Critical performance measures:** Gender composition of the duty holder organisation. Gender composition of part-time workers in the duty holder organisation. Gender composition of senior leaders in the duty holder organisation.
Target/s	By 2029, maintain overall workforce gender balance within a 45–55% women/men range, recognising that changes to representation are subject to turnover and merit-based appointment processes. This indicator focuses on maintaining overall gender balance across the workforce. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit shows that the parliamentary workforce is broadly gender balanced, with women well represented in senior leadership roles and more likely than men to be employed in part-time roles, particularly at lower classification levels. These patterns reflect structural and operational factors, including long tenure, limited turnover and historically limited availability of flexible work at senior levels. The target for this indicator seeks to sustain whole-of-workforce gender balance through to 2029. It is framed to be achievable and proportionate, recognising that appointments are merit-based and dependent on workforce movement, organisational needs and statutory or operational requirements. Strategies under this indicator focus on embedding gender considerations into workforce and succession planning, expanding access to senior flexible work arrangements where operationally feasible, and strengthening annual monitoring and reporting of workforce composition. These actions are designed to address systemic barriers rather than impose numerical quotas, and align with related strategies under recruitment and promotion, pay equity, flexible work and occupational segregation indicators. Collectively, they support sustained progress while remaining appropriate to the parliamentary context.

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Embed gender balance considerations into workforce and succession planning for leadership roles, including consideration at key decision points	2026–2030	3,5,7

Increase the availability and visibility of senior part-time, job-share and other flexible leadership roles where operationally feasible	2026–2028	6
Monitor gender composition by level on an annual basis and report outcomes to Executive governance forums	Annual	

Indicator 2: Gender composition of the governing body

Critical performance measures:
Gender composition of the duty holder organisation's Duty Holders in 2025:
Governing body: 66.7% women / 33.3% men (2W:1M)

The parliamentary departments do not have a single governing body. For the purposes of this indicator, the duty holders are the Heads of Department across the three employing authorities.

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit did not identify a current numerical gender imbalance among duty holders. Gender representation is within legislated parameters at the time of the audit.

However, the parliamentary context comprises three separate employing authorities, each operating under distinct statutory and governance arrangements. This structural complexity shapes the gender equality risks relevant to this indicator and limits the availability of direct organisational levers to influence outcomes.

The audit highlights that gender balance at this level is inherently fragile due to the small size of senior decision-making cohorts. Changes to a single role or appointment can materially affect overall representation, with limited opportunity for timely correction. Statutory appointment and employment frameworks further constrain the ability to proactively influence composition, placing greater reliance on monitoring, transparency and engagement rather than direct intervention.

Infrequent appointment and reappointment cycles heighten this risk, as any imbalance that emerges may persist for extended periods before corrective action is possible. This underscores the importance of maintaining oversight at key decision points, including appointment, reappointment and succession planning, across all three employing authorities.

The audit also identifies a risk of complacency where numerical balance has been achieved. In the absence of a single governing body, maintaining consistent understanding of gender equality obligations — including Positive Duty responsibilities — requires deliberate, coordinated effort across employers.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 2 is not current under-representation, but the ongoing risk of regression arising from fragmented governance arrangements, small cohort sizes and limited appointment levers.

Accordingly, this indicator is framed around sustained oversight, shared accountability and governance capability, rather than numerical correction.

Measures	**Critical performance measures:** Gender composition of the duty holder organisation's Senior Leadership.
Target/s	Maintain senior leadership gender composition within a 40–60% women/men range across the GEAP lifecycle, subject to statutory appointment processes. This indicator addresses gender balance within governing bodies, recognising the influence of senior leaders on organisational culture, decision-making and accountability. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit shows that governing body composition is currently within the legislated gender balance range. While no immediate numerical imbalance exists, maintaining appropriate representation over time requires ongoing oversight, particularly given statutory appointment arrangements and infrequent appointment cycles. The target therefore focuses on sustaining gender composition within a 40–60% range across the GEAP lifecycle, rather than driving further numerical change. This approach aligns with Commission guidance to maintain gains where balance has already been achieved and reflects the limited organisational levers available to directly influence outcomes. Strategies under this indicator emphasise continued monitoring at points of appointment and reappointment, alongside capability-building through gender equality and Positive Duty briefings. These actions support informed governance and reinforce accountability for gender equality outcomes, including in relation to workplace safety and sexual harassment prevention.

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Maintain monitoring of gender composition at points of appointment and reappointment of duty holders	Ongoing	-
Provide gender equality and Positive Duty briefings to Executive to support informed governance and oversight	2026–2027	4

Indicator 3: Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender

Critical performance measures:
Mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group in 2025: Pay gaps evident at classification levels VPS-6 and below and across several occupational groups
Mean total remuneration senior leader gender pay gap in 2025: -5.6% (women higher)

Supplementary measures:
Mean base salary pay gap in 2025: Mean total remuneration gap: 6.7% (men higher)
Median total remuneration pay gap in 2025: Median total remuneration gap: 4.9% (men higher)
Median base salary pay gap in 2025: 4.8% (men higher)

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified persistent gender pay gaps that reflect underlying structural and systemic factors rather than individual capability, performance or isolated remuneration decisions.

Both mean and median gender pay gaps were identified, with men receiving higher total remuneration on average. Pay disparities are most evident at lower classification levels and across specific occupational groups, where women are more heavily concentrated. These outcomes are closely linked to classification distribution and occupational segregation, with women over-represented in lower-paid roles and under-represented in higher-paid, specialist and leadership positions.

The audit also identified governance and consistency issues within remuneration practices as contributing factors. Variability in starting salaries, progression timing, access to allowances and higher-duties opportunities can compound over time, particularly in a workforce characterised by long tenure and limited turnover. Small cohort sizes further amplify the impact of individual remuneration decisions on overall pay gap outcomes.

Structural constraints within classification frameworks limit the ability to address pay gaps through direct adjustment alone. Instead, the audit highlights the importance of strengthening system-level controls, transparency and monitoring to ensure remuneration decisions are applied consistently and equitably. This includes clearer articulation of remuneration principles, stronger oversight of starting salaries and progression decisions, and regular analysis of pay outcomes at both organisational and cohort levels.

Importantly, the audit found no evidence that observed pay gaps are driven by differences in capability or performance. Rather, the identified gender pay gaps reflect the cumulative impact of workforce composition, historical role distribution, access to progression opportunities and remuneration governance arrangements over time.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 3 is the persistence of structurally driven gender pay gaps, particularly in total remuneration. These gaps are reinforced by occupational segregation, classification distribution and remuneration governance practices. Addressing these issues requires sustained, system-focused action aligned with recruitment, workforce planning, career development and remuneration governance strategies, rather than isolated or one-off pay interventions.

Measures	Critical performance measures:	Supplementary measures:
	Mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group. Mean total remuneration senior leader gender pay gap.	Mean base salary pay gap. Median total remuneration pay gap. Median base salary pay gap.
Target/s	By 2030, reduce the mean total remuneration gender pay gap by at least 50% (to ≤3.4%) and continue to reduce median gaps, acknowledging structural classification arrangements and small cohort sizes. This indicator seeks to reduce identified gender pay gaps while acknowledging the structural classification arrangements and small cohort sizes that influence remuneration outcomes in parliamentary departments. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified a mean total remuneration gender pay gap of 6.7% and a median gap of 4.9%, with gaps more pronounced at lower classification levels and across certain occupational groups.	

	The target aims to reduce the mean total remuneration gender pay gap by at least 50% by 2030, while continuing to reduce median gaps. This represents a meaningful improvement while remaining realistic given workforce size, tenure and classification structures. Strategies focus on strengthening governance, consistency and transparency rather than individual pay adjustments. Biennial pay gap analysis strengthened controls over starting salaries and progression, and clearer communication of remuneration principles are intended to reduce bias over time. These actions are closely linked to recruitment, promotion and workforce composition strategies, reinforcing a whole-of-system approach to pay equity.

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Undertake biennial gender pay gap analysis at organisational and cohort levels to monitor trends and identify emerging risks	2026, 2027, 2028	1, 5
Strengthen governance of starting salaries, progression and allowances to support consistency and minimise bias	2026–2027	5
Increase transparency of remuneration principles, processes and pathways to support employee understanding and confidence	2026–2028	5

Indicator 4: Sexual harassment in the workplace

Critical performance measures:
Anonymous experience rate of sexual harassment in 2025: 6%
Number of formal reports of sexual harassment in 2025: 0

Supplementary measures:
The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified sexual harassment as a significant gender equality risk, primarily due to under-reporting and reduced confidence in formal reporting mechanisms rather than an absence of incidence.

While a proportion of employees reported experiencing sexual harassment, only a small proportion indicated that they had made a report, and no matters were recorded as formal reports to Human Resources. This disparity indicates a gap between lived experience and organisational reporting data, reflecting barriers to reporting rather than an absence of risk or harm. Audit findings suggest these barriers include concerns about confidentiality, fear of negative personal or career consequences, uncertainty about outcomes, and perceptions regarding the effectiveness or consistency of organisational responses.

Some respondents also indicated that concerns may have been raised or managed at a local level rather than through formal reporting pathways.

The audit further identified gendered differences in perceptions of workplace safety and confidence to call out inappropriate behaviour. Women were more likely than men to report experiencing sexual harassment and to indicate lower confidence in raising concerns. These experiences and perceptions can affect engagement, wellbeing, retention and workforce participation, and contribute to broader gender inequality outcomes.

Structural and cultural factors within the parliamentary environment further compound these risks. Complex working arrangements, long tenure and the presence of individuals who are not employees of the parliamentary departments can blur accountability and complicate reporting pathways. These factors may reinforce reluctance to report and reduce confidence in organisational systems.

Importantly, the audit found no evidence that under-reporting reflects an absence of harm. Rather, the findings highlight the need to strengthen system-level prevention, reporting and response mechanisms, consistent with Positive Duty obligations. Where sexual harassment is not effectively prevented or addressed, it can have downstream impacts on career progression, workforce participation and gender pay equity, reinforcing inequalities identified under other indicators.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 4 is the gap between experience and reporting, driven by trust, cultural and system-level barriers. Addressing this requires sustained focus on prevention, clear and accessible reporting pathways, consistent education and capability development, and strengthened confidence in organisational responses, rather than reliance on complaint volumes alone.

Measures	**Critical performance measures:** Anonymous experience rate of sexual harassment. Number of formal reports of sexual harassment.	**Supplementary measures:** Participants who said they reported sexual harassment. Reasons for not making a formal sexual harassment complaint.

		Satisfaction with handling of workplace sexual harassment complaint. Satisfaction with handling of formal workplace sexual harassment complaint. Reported safe to call out inappropriate behaviour, by gender
Target/s	By 2030, increase the proportion of people who formally report sexual harassment through the pathways established in the *Reporting and Managing Inappropriate Behaviour in the Workplace Policy* to at least 30% of those who experience it, and reduce the gender gap in feeling safe to call out inappropriate behaviour to five percentage points or less. This indicator addresses workplace sexual harassment, with a particular focus on improving confidence in reporting systems and perceptions of workplace safety. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified that 6.0% of respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment, while only a small proportion indicated they had made a formal report. This disparity suggests under-reporting rather than an absence of risk or harm. The targets are designed to strengthen trust in reporting pathways, organisational responses and workplace culture. Any increase in formal reporting is intended to reflect improved confidence in systems and responses, rather than increased incidence. Reducing gender differences in perceived safety when calling out inappropriate behaviour supports a more consistent and prevention-focused workplace culture across all genders. Strategies under this indicator prioritise clarity and accessibility of reporting pathways, consistent education through respectful workplace and active bystander training, and improved alignment between survey data and workforce reporting systems. Collectively, these actions support compliance with Positive Duty obligations and reinforce a preventative, system-focused approach to addressing workplace sexual harassment.	

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Clarify and promote reporting pathways, including confidential and informal options, to support consistent understanding and use	2026	-
Embed active bystander and respectful workplace training as core capability for all staff	2026–2029	6
Strengthen data capture and alignment between survey insights and workforce reporting systems to improve monitoring and response	2026–2028	-

Indicator 5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

Critical performance measures:
Gender composition of recruited employees in 2025: 43.9% women / 56.1% men
Gender composition of employees who were promoted in 2025: 60.0% women / 40.0% men
Perceptions of recruitment, by gender in 2025: Women less likely to perceive recruitment as fair (67%)
Perceptions of promotion, by gender in 2025: Women less likely to perceive recruitment as fair (45%)

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified that while recruitment and promotion outcomes are broadly balanced in aggregate, gender inequality persists in how these processes are experienced and perceived, particularly by women. This indicates that gender inequality in this area relates less to overt exclusion and more to confidence, transparency and consistency within recruitment and promotion systems and practices.

Audit data shows that women are less likely than men to perceive recruitment and promotion processes as fair. This perception gap points to potential weaknesses in clarity of decision-making, communication of outcomes, feedback provided to candidates and consistency in how processes are applied. Even where numerical outcomes appear balanced, limited transparency can undermine trust and confidence in systems, affecting engagement, retention and willingness to pursue advancement opportunities.

The audit also identified structural constraints that limit access to progression opportunities, particularly at mid- to senior levels. Long tenure, limited turnover and reliance on informal or short-term opportunities such as higher duties and secondments can advantage individuals with greater visibility or flexibility. Where access to these opportunities is uneven, cumulative advantage can develop over time, reinforcing gender disparities in career progression and leadership representation.

Occupational segregation and classification distribution further shape recruitment and promotion outcomes. Women remain over-represented in roles with fewer promotion pathways and under-represented in roles that more commonly lead to senior positions. As a result, recruitment and promotion processes alone are insufficient to address gender imbalance without complementary workforce planning, development and pipeline strategies.

The audit also highlighted the importance of consistent governance and bias-mitigation measures. Variability in panel composition, assessment methods and decision-making frameworks can contribute to real or perceived inequity. Where processes rely heavily on discretion without sufficient structure, the risk of unconscious bias increases, even within merit-based systems.

Importantly, the audit found no evidence that differences in recruitment or promotion outcomes are driven by capability or performance, rather it identified inequalities that reflect the interaction of workforce structure, opportunity distribution and process transparency over time.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 5 is the gap between formal equity of recruitment and promotion processes and employee confidence in their fairness. Addressing this requires system-level improvements to transparency, consistency, access to development opportunities and governance of recruitment and promotion practices, aligned with broader strategies under workforce composition, pay equity and occupational segregation indicators.

Measures	**Critical performance measures:** Gender composition of recruited employees. Gender composition of employees who were promoted. Perceptions of recruitment, by gender. Perceptions of promotion, by gender.	**Additional measures:** Access to higher-duties opportunities and acting roles, by gender. Representation of women and men in applicant shortlists and selection outcomes.
Target/s	**By 2029:** • Recruitment outcomes broadly reflect workforce availability (45–55% women/men), and • Reduce the gender gap in perceived fairness of promotion processes to five percentage points or less. This indicator addresses confidence, transparency and consistency in recruitment and promotion practices. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit shows that while recruitment and promotion outcomes are broadly balanced numerically, women are less likely than men to perceive these processes as fair. This indicates that gender inequality in this area is primarily experienced through process design, governance and communication, rather than outcomes alone. The targets focus on strengthening trust and confidence in recruitment and promotion systems, alongside maintaining broadly representative outcomes over time. Reducing the gender gap in perceived fairness is intended to reflect improved transparency, consistency and clarity in decision-making, feedback and access to progression opportunities. Strategies under this indicator focus on reviewing recruitment and promotion practices for bias and consistency, strengthening governance and decision-making frameworks, and improving access to development, higher-duties and progression pathways. These actions complement broader workforce composition, pay equity and occupational segregation strategies by supporting equitable, transparent and credible career progression across the parliamentary departments.	

Strategy	**Timeline**	**Related to other indicators**
Review recruitment and promotion processes to identify and address potential bias, improve transparency and support consistent decision-making	2026–2027	3
Require diverse selection panels and use structured assessment processes to support fair and consistent recruitment and promotion outcomes	Ongoing	1
Increase access to development opportunities, higher-duties roles and secondments at mid- to senior levels to support equitable progression pathways	2026–2029	1, 3

Indicator 6: Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to: family violence leave, flexible working arrangements, and working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities

Critical performance measures:

Average weeks of parental leave, by gender in 2025: women 47.8 weeks; men 5.9 weeks

Perceptions of flexible work culture, by gender in 2025: 83% of women agreed they are confident that a request for flexible work would be given due consideration, 79% of men agreed with this statement - Gender gap: 4 percentage points, with men less favourable

Supplementary measures:

Gender composition of parental leave takers in 2025: 65.0% women (13 employees), 35.0% men (7 employees)

Total parental leave takers: 21

Gender gap in carer's leave in 2025: The audit notes that data on carer's leave uptake was not captured or not available, meaning a gender gap could not be calculated for this period.

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified persistent gender inequality in the uptake and experience of leave and flexible working arrangements. These outcomes reflect entrenched gendered patterns of caring and workforce participation rather than lack of policy availability.

Audit data shows a substantial disparity in parental leave uptake, with women taking significantly longer periods of parental leave than men. This pattern reinforces unequal caring responsibilities and contributes to career interruption risks for women, with downstream impacts on progression, representation at senior levels and gender pay equity. Men's comparatively low uptake of parental leave suggests the presence of cultural and structural barriers to shared care, including norms around availability, leadership expectations and perceptions of flexibility.

The audit also identified low formal uptake of flexible work arrangements across all genders, despite evidence of informal flexibility occurring in practice. Inconsistent recording and formalisation of flexible work arrangements limits transparency, reduces organisational oversight and can contribute to inequitable access. Where flexible work is negotiated informally, it may advantage some employees while constraining others, particularly at senior levels.

Women are more likely than men to access flexible work arrangements, particularly part-time work, and are disproportionately represented in lower-level roles where flexibility is more readily available. Conversely, limited availability and visibility of flexible work options at senior levels constrains progression pathways and reinforces gendered participation patterns. This dynamic contributes to cumulative disadvantage over time, particularly in a workforce characterised by long tenure and limited turnover.

Leadership behaviour and workplace culture play a significant role in shaping flexibility outcomes. Inconsistent messaging, discretionary decision-making and uncertainty about operational feasibility can discourage uptake, particularly among men and employees seeking flexible arrangements in senior or non-traditional roles.

Importantly, the audit found no evidence that unequal outcomes are driven by differences in commitment or capability, rather, they reflect the interaction of workplace norms, structural constraints and uneven access to flexible work and caring arrangements.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 6 is the reinforcement of gendered caring roles through unequal leave uptake and inconsistent access to flexible work. These patterns contribute to broader inequalities in progression, pay and representation. Addressing these issues requires system-level action to normalise flexibility, strengthen consistency and transparency, and support shared care across all levels of the parliamentary departments.

<table>
<tr><td>Measures</td><td>Critical performance measures:
Average weeks of parental leave, by gender.
Uptake of flexible work, by gender.
Perceptions of flexible work culture, by gender.</td><td>Supplementary measures:
Gender composition of parental leave takers.
Gender gap in carer's leave.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Target/s</td><td colspan="2">By 2029:
Increase men's average parental leave uptake to at least 10 weeks
Increase formal flexible work uptake for all genders to at least 15%
Increase employee confidence that a request for flexible work would be given due consideration to at least 90% for all genders
This indicator addresses gendered patterns in caring responsibilities and utilisation of flexible working arrangements across the parliamentary departments.

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified a substantial gap in parental leave uptake between women and men, alongside lower confidence among men that flexible work requests would be supported. The audit also identified inconsistent recording of formal flexible work arrangements, limiting transparency and organisational oversight.

The targets focus on supporting more equitable sharing of caring responsibilities and strengthening consistency, confidence and transparency in flexible work practices. Any increase in parental leave uptake by men is intended to reflect reduced cultural and structural barriers to shared care, rather than coercive or quota-based approaches.
Improved formal uptake and recording of flexible work arrangements supports equitable access, effective monitoring and informed workforce planning.

By 2029, progress is expected to be reflected through increased confidence and uptake of parental leave by men, more consistent recording and monitoring of flexible work arrangements, and high levels of confidence across all genders that requests for flexibility will be given due consideration.</td></tr>
</table>

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Embed flexible work and shared care arrangements as standard workforce practices across roles, where operationally feasible	2026–2029	1, 3
Improve recording and monitoring of flexible work arrangements and carers' leave to support transparency and equitable access	2026–2027	-
Implement targeted communication to support increased uptake of parental leave by men	2026–2028	3

Indicator 7: Gendered segregation within the workplace

Critical performance measures:
Occupational gender segregation in 2025: Men over-represented in Managers (31%W:69%M), Technicians/Trades (24.4%W:75.6%M) and Women over-represented in Clerical/Admin (68.9%W:31.1%M)

The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified persistent occupational segregation as a key gender inequality issue within the parliamentary departments. While overall workforce gender balance is broadly even, women and men remain concentrated in different occupational groups, limiting equitable access to career pathways, leadership opportunities and remuneration outcomes.

Audit data shows that men are over-represented in managerial and technical roles, while women are over-represented in clerical and administrative roles. These patterns reflect historical workforce composition, recruitment pipelines and occupational norms, rather than differences in capability or aspiration. Occupational segregation contributes directly to gender pay gaps and uneven representation at senior levels, reinforcing cumulative disadvantage over time.

The audit also highlights that career pathways and development opportunities are unevenly distributed across occupational groups. Roles dominated by women tend to have fewer structured progression pathways and limited access to leadership-enabling experiences such as higher-duties opportunities, secondments and specialist training. In contrast, roles dominated by men more frequently align with pathways to senior leadership and higher remuneration. Long tenure and limited turnover further entrench these patterns, as opportunities to shift occupational composition arise infrequently.

Data and classification limitations also affect visibility of segregation within the parliamentary context. Reliance on standard occupational classifications can mask role complexity and the breadth of capability required for parliamentary work, reducing insight into how segregation operates across functions and career pathways. Small cohort sizes further constrain the ability to track change over time or assess the impact of interventions using quantitative measures alone.

Importantly, the audit found no evidence that occupational segregation reflects differences in skill, performance or motivation. Rather, occupational segregation is driven by structural factors including historical role design, workforce planning practices, recruitment pipelines and uneven access to development opportunities, alongside interactions with flexible work and caring responsibilities.

Overall, the key gender equality issue for Indicator 7 is the persistence of structurally embedded occupational segregation, which limits career mobility, reinforces gender pay gaps and constrains leadership diversity. Addressing this issue requires coordinated, long-term action across attraction strategies, workforce planning, capability development and data analysis, aligned with actions under recruitment, pay equity and workforce composition indicators.

Measures	**Critical performance measures:** Occupational gender segregation.
Target/s	By 2029, achieve no more than 65% representation of any one gender within key occupational groupings where workforce size allows. This indicator addresses occupational segregation, where women and men are concentrated in different types of roles across the parliamentary departments. The FY25 Workplace Gender Audit shows that men are over-represented in managerial and technical roles, while women are over-represented in clerical and administrative roles. These patterns can contribute to gender pay gaps, constrained career mobility and unequal access to leadership pathways. The target seeks to reduce occupational segregation by limiting the concentration of any one gender to no more than 65% within key occupational groupings by 2029, where workforce size and structure allow. The target is intentionally flexible to reflect small cohort sizes, limited turnover and operational requirements within the parliamentary context.

	Strategies under this indicator focus on targeted attraction, development and career pathway initiatives, supported by improved data analysis tailored to parliamentary roles and functions. These actions reinforce progress under recruitment and promotion, workforce composition and pay equity indicators, and support long-term, system-level change.

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Use targeted attraction and development strategies to diversify occupational pipelines where workforce size and operational requirements allow	2026–2030	1, 5
Expand career pathways and development opportunities across occupational groups to support mobility and progression	2026–2029	3
Supplement ANZSCO data with parliamentary-specific role and capability analysis to improve insight into occupational segregation	2027–2028	1

Additional areas of focus

In addition to the issues addressed through the seven workplace gender equality indicators, the FY25 Workplace Gender Audit identified a set of cross-cutting gender equality challenges that are not fully captured by quantitative measures alone and require sustained cultural and system-level attention.

A key issue identified is the risk that progress achieved under the 2022–2025 Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) is not yet fully embedded as business-as-usual practice. While the previous GEAP established important foundations—particularly in awareness of gender equality, respectful workplace behaviours and Positive Duty obligations—the audit indicates that these gains require ongoing reinforcement. Without continued leadership visibility, accountability and practical application, there is a risk that gender equality initiatives are perceived as time-limited rather than integral to everyday work.

The audit also highlighted the challenge of consistently socialising gender equality within a complex parliamentary environment. Long tenure deeply established practices and the presence of individuals who are not employees of the parliamentary departments can dilute accountability and contribute to uneven understanding of behavioural expectations. This complexity increases the importance of ongoing communication, leadership reinforcement and practical application of gender equality principles, rather than reliance on policy settings or one-off training interventions alone.

Variable leadership confidence and capability in applying gender-inclusive practices consistently was also identified as a contributing factor. While relevant frameworks and policies are largely in place, implementation can vary across teams and work areas. Inconsistent application—such as in responding to inappropriate behaviour, supporting flexible work, or embedding equity considerations into decision-making—can affect staff confidence and contribute to uneven lived experience.

The audit further noted limitations in data and systems that constrain insight and early identification of emerging issues. Small cohort sizes, diverse role types and system constraints reduce the ability to measure impact with precision using quantitative data alone. This reinforces the need to supplement workforce metrics with qualitative insights, staff feedback and ongoing engagement to inform targeted and proportionate action.

Overall, the additional gender equality issue identified by the audit is the need to move from foundational change to sustained, embedded cultural practice. Accordingly, the 2026–2029 GEAP places emphasis on consolidating and embedding initiatives from the 2022–2025 GEAP, strengthening leadership accountability, and actively reinforcing gender equality as a shared and ongoing responsibility across the parliamentary environment.

Measures	**Performance measures:** • Evidence that key initiatives from the 2022–2025 GEAP are ongoing and embedded as business-as-usual, demonstrated through maintained/updated policies and frameworks, repeat capability development, and regular governance reporting (rather than concluded as one-off projects). • Demonstrated embedding of priority actions from the 2022–2025 GEAP into ongoing governance arrangements and standard business practices, evidenced through continued delivery, periodic refresh/review, and Executive-level oversight and reporting.	**Additional measures:** • Proportion of people leaders completing gender equality, respectful workplace or Positive Duty (Equal Opportunity) capability development. • Explicit inclusion of gender equality responsibilities in leadership role expectations, performance frameworks or accountability mechanisms. • Qualitative feedback (for example, surveys or focus groups) indicating improved understanding of behavioural expectations across different workforce cohorts. • Increased consistency in how leaders apply gender-inclusive practices, reflected in leadership

	• Increased consistency in the application of gender-inclusive practices by leaders and managers, evidenced through participation in capability development and improved staff confidence in leaders' responses to gender equality and respectful workplace issues. • Maintenance or improvement in trust-based cultural indicators, including confidence to raise issues, perceptions of fairness and psychological safety, indicating that gender equality is reinforced as part of everyday workplace culture. • Stable or improving workforce understanding of gender equality, respectful behaviours and Positive Duty obligations, measured through staff survey results, pulse checks and participation in ongoing communications and education activities relevant to the parliamentary context.	participation in capability development and improved staff confidence in leaders' responses to gender-related issues. • Demonstrated use of multiple data sources (for example, audit, census and staff survey data) to monitor GEAP indicators and inform ongoing refinement
Target/s	**By 2027:** 100% of people leaders complete respectful workplace, Positive Duty (Equal Opportunity) and gender-inclusive leadership capability development. **By 2028:** Reduce gender differences in perceptions of manager support for flexible work and safe reporting to five percentage points or less. **By 2029:** Demonstrate consistent use of multiple data sources (for example, audit, census and staff survey data) to monitor GEAP indicators and inform ongoing refinement.	

Strategy	Timeline	Related to other indicators
Embed and sustain priority initiatives from the 2022–2025 GEAP as business-as-usual through ongoing governance oversight and periodic review	2026–2029 (with annual review)	1, 2, 3, 4 ,5, 6, 7
Actively reinforce and socialise gender equality expectations across the parliamentary environment through consistent leadership messaging and workforce practices	2026–2029	4, 5, 6
Strengthen leadership capability and accountability for applying gender-inclusive practices consistently	2026–2029	1, 4, 5, 6
Reinforce trust, confidence and cultural sustainability through consistent application of respectful workplace behaviours, reporting pathways and response mechanisms	2026–2029	3, 4, 5

Section 13: Identifying current and required resources

Implementation of the 2026–2029 Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) has been assessed as achievable within existing organisational resources, on the basis that actions continue to be embedded into core business rather than delivered as a standalone program. Resourcing requirements across the GEAP lifecycle are primarily focused on coordination, governance, capability and system enablement, rather than additional headcount.

Overall resourcing approach

Resourcing is deliberately integrated and distributed across the organisation to support sustainable delivery:

- Leadership and governance – Executive and departmental leaders provide sponsorship, prioritisation and accountability for GEAP delivery, with actions embedded within existing governance forums, planning cycles and reporting mechanisms.
- People & Capability coordination – The People & Capability function provides central coordination, technical expertise and assurance, including data analysis, policy integration, workforce advice and reporting to the Commission, ensuring alignment with the Gender Equality Act and Positive Duty obligations.
- Operational ownership – Responsibility for implementation sits with business areas and managers, ensuring gender equality strategies are applied through everyday workforce management, decision-making and service delivery, rather than as discrete initiatives.
- Systems and data – Existing HR, payroll, survey and reporting systems, supplemented by the staff census and planned HCMS uplift, support monitoring, evaluation and evidence-based decision-making across the GEAP term.

Financial, technological and physical resources have been assessed as adequate to support planned GEAP activities. Actions are prioritised within existing budgets, systems and workplace infrastructure. Where specialist capability is required (for example, targeted training or data uplift), this will be addressed through time-limited investment rather than ongoing resourcing.

GEAP Working Group

A dedicated GEAP Working Group supports implementation across the life of the plan and is a primary mechanism for coordination, oversight and risk management.

The Working Group:

- is cross-departmental, with standing members drawn from the three parliamentary departments, and operates under Terms of Reference endorsed by senior leadership;
- monitors progress, supports consistent implementation and coordinates reporting; and
- provides a forum to identify risks, resolve issues and advise on resource prioritisation.

The Working Group complements, but does not replace, line accountability for delivery.

Life-cycle sustainability

Resourcing has been structured to support long-term, sustainable change. By embedding GEAP actions into existing roles, systems and governance structures, the organisation reduces reliance on individual champions and mitigates continuity risks associated with turnover or changing priorities. This approach supports ongoing implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement across the GEAP lifecycle, while remaining proportionate to organisational size, workforce composition and the parliamentary context.

Section 14: Developing a resourcing plan

The development of the 2026 Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) was resourced through existing governance, workforce and capability structures, with coordination led by People & Capability and oversight provided by senior leadership. Subject matter expertise was drawn from across the parliamentary departments, enabling workforce data analysis, consultation, drafting and assurance to be undertaken as part of core business rather than as a standalone project.

Implementation of the GEAP will continue to be resourced in an integrated and proportionate manner across its life cycle. Responsibility for delivery of strategies sits with business areas and leaders, supported by People & Capability through coordination, policy integration, workforce advice, data analysis and reporting to the Commission. This approach ensures that actions addressing each workplace gender equality indicator are embedded into everyday workforce management, decision-making and governance processes.

Financial, technological and physical resources have been assessed as adequate to support implementation of the GEAP strategies. Actions will be progressed using existing budgets, systems and workplace infrastructure, including HR, payroll, survey and reporting systems, supplemented by the staff census and the planned HCMS uplift. Where specialist capability is required (for example, targeted training, facilitation or data uplift), this will be addressed through time-limited investment rather than ongoing resourcing, ensuring alignment with risk, scale and impact.

The effectiveness and adequacy of resourcing will be monitored throughout the life of the GEAP through established governance and reporting mechanisms. The GEAP Working Group will regularly review progress against actions, delivery impacts and emerging risks, including whether resourcing arrangements remain sufficient to support reasonable and material progress across the indicators.

Where monitoring identifies pressure points, delivery risks or changes in organisational context, these matters will be escalated through established governance pathways for consideration and adjustment. This may include reprioritisation of actions, refinement of timelines or targeted allocation of additional capability.

This monitoring approach supports continuous oversight and adjustment across the GEAP life cycle, ensuring that resourcing remains appropriate, responsive and proportionate, and that the organisation can demonstrate sustained progress against the workplace gender equality indicators set out in the Act.

Other additions or comments

Implementation of the GEAP will be approached as a sustained program of organisational improvement, embedded in business-as-usual governance and people management practice rather than delivered as a discrete or time-limited initiative. The plan is grounded in the Workplace Gender Audit and consultation, which confirmed that gender inequality in the parliamentary departments is shaped primarily by structural, cultural and system-level factors, including the realities of a multi-employer environment, small cohort sizes and limited workforce churn. In this context, the GEAP prioritises actions that strengthen prevention, transparency and capability: building leader and manager confidence to apply policies consistently, improving trust in reporting and response pathways, and ensuring that workforce decisions—such as role design, recruitment, progression, flexible work and remuneration—are made with an explicit equity lens.

Progress will be monitored through a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including workforce metrics, pay gap analysis and staff feedback, recognising data limitations and the need to interpret trends carefully in a relatively small workforce. Oversight through established governance arrangements will support regular review of delivery, risks and resourcing, with actions refined where necessary to remain practical, proportionate and aligned to legislative obligations, including the Positive Duty. Taken together, the GEAP provides a clear and accountable pathway to consolidate the foundations established under previous work and to drive durable improvements in safety, fairness and opportunity across the parliamentary workplace.