

First Nations Women

Subject/Issue

Intergenerational trauma, systemic racism and a lack of cultural safety are significant barriers for First Nations women resulting in lower outcomes across a wide ranges of areas compared to non-Indigenous Australians including health, rates of violence and workforce participation.

Key points

- The Government is committed to achieving gender equality for First Nations women and improving their safety and economic security.
 - The Government will work in full and genuine partnership with First Nations people, communities and organisations to identify ways to make a practical difference and help close the gap.
- The OFW takes a coordination role across government on policies and programs for first nations women and children
 - This includes bringing together key agencies from across government who are working on First Nations gender equality issues every 8 weeks.
 - This includes AHRC (staff of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Social Justice Commissioner Oscar), Attorney Generals Department (First Nations Justice), Department of Social Services (Safety) and National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).
- In addition the OFW is collaborating closely with the office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner (June Oscar) on Wiyi Yani u Thangani (Women's Voices) and ensuring alignment with the National Strategy for gender equality
 - This includes OFW representation on the Wiyi Yani u Thangani National Framework for Action Advisory Group.
- In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government has invested \$1.9 billion in initiatives for First Nations people and communities.
 - Within the broader packages for First Nations funding, there are a series of targeted measures for women's safety, health and wellbeing aimed at improving outcomes for First Nations women and girls.
 - This includes \$262.6 million for First Nations family safety initiatives to end family violence.

- OFW manages the relationship with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA), funded under the Women's Leadership and Development Program.
 - NATSIWA provides Government with advice on a range of policies relating to First Nations women's safety, economic security, health and leadership.

First Nations Women's Safety

- First Nations women experience heightened vulnerability to harm because of intergenerational trauma and intersectional discrimination while caring for large and extended families with their own compounding experiences of individual and systemic violence and discrimination.
- Target 13 of Closing the Gap (CTG) specifically focuses on improving First Nation women's safety: *By 2032, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50%, as progress towards zero).*
 - The Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services have a joint responsibility for this target.
- As a part of the May 2023-24 Budget, the Government invested \$262.6 million in First Nations women's safety, including:
 - \$194 million for the dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan(Action plan) under the National Plan, and
 - \$68.6 million to support Family Violence Prevent Legal Services across Australia.
- This is in addition to dedicated investments in Central Australia
- October and May Budget Measures listed at (Attachment A).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan

- First Nations women's safety is addressed by a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025 (Action Plan) under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan).
 - This was launched on 16 August 2023 along with the First Action Plan 2023-2027 and Outcomes Framework.
 - The Action Plan was developed by Government in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual Violence.
- The Action Plan will take immediate action on addressing the high rates of violence, discrimination and disadvantage impacting the safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Detailed questions about the action plan should be directed to the Social Services Portfolio.

First Nations National Plan

- The Australian Government is committed to developing a standalone First Nations National Plan to address the unacceptably high rates of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
 - This aligns with Target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Safety).
- The First Nations National Plan will be developed through a comprehensive, consultative process that supports genuine partnership and shared decision-making with First Nations communities (to be led by DSS).
 - Department of Social Services opened an EOI process for the Steering Committee, which closed on the 28 August 2023
 - The Minister for Social Services in consultation with the Department of Social Services, Coalition of the Peaks and National Indigenous Australians Agency will review all the EOIs received for appointment of both non-Government First Nations and Government members.

Detailed questions about the national plan should be directed to the Social Services Portfolio.

Budget Measures – Action Plan/National Plan

- As a part of the May 2023-24 Budget, the Government has committed \$194 million over five years to support the development and activities under the dedicated Action Plan. This includes:
 - \$145.3 million to support activities addressing immediate safety concerns of First Nations women and children, experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, family and domestic violence.
 - Funding includes a provision of \$128.6 million in the Contingency Reserve.
 - \$23.2 million to partner with local organisations to design, deliver and evaluate community-led, place-based, trauma-aware and culturally responsive healing programs for First Nations children and families who are impacted by family violence or at risk of engagement with the child protection systems
 - \$17.6 million to deliver on family safety initiatives under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan
 - \$7.8 million over five years from 2023-24 (and \$4 million in 2027-28) to Establish a National Peak Body for First Nations and support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan, including First Nations Secretariat, governance arrangements, community engagement and drafting.

First Nations Health and Wellbeing

- Progress to close the gap in life expectancy by 2031 (CTG target 1) is currently not on track. The Government is committed to accelerating progress to close the gap in health outcomes.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females born in 2015-2017 are expected to live to 75.6 years compared to 83.4 years for non-Indigenous females, a gap in life expectancy of 7.8 years
- First Nations women and girls are more likely to experience significantly poorer health and health outcomes than non-Indigenous women and girls. This extends across many key areas, including:
 - life expectancy and mortality
 - incidences of mental illness and chronic conditions
 - health risk factors, such as smoking, alcohol, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating habits
 - sexual health and child and maternal health
 - potentially avoidable deaths and hospitalisations¹.
- First Nations women also experience poorer health outcomes due to the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma, institutional racial discrimination and barriers to accessing culturally safe health care.
 - This results in adverse health outcomes and health service avoidance.²
 - Other social determinants of health, such as employment and housing adequacy, are also more likely to affect First Nations people³.
- The Government has committed \$363.1 million over four years from 2023-24 to support the Government's commitment to close the gap in First Nations peoples' health and wellbeing outcomes. Targeted investments to improve First Nations women's health outcomes include:
 - \$238.5 million over four years from 2023–24 to improve First Nations cancer outcomes through building capability and growing the healthcare workforce to improve screening and prevention activities, coordination, access support and research and data collection
 - Cancer (and other neoplasms) is the leading cause of death for Indigenous females.⁴

¹ National Women's Health Strategy, 2020-2030

² Impact of racism and discrimination on the physical and mental health among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Australia: a protocol for a scoping review; [Position statement-Impacts of racism on the health and wellbeing of indigenous Australians](#); [NACCHO Aboriginal health and racism](#)

³ [Determinants of health for Indigenous Australians - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](#) accessed 10 November 2022.

⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Health Performance Framework – Summary Report 2023

- Extending existing alcohol and drug treatment in communities, including \$3.5 million to The Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women.
- \$28.2 million over three years from 2023-24 for workforce accommodation to support the delivery of 30 dialysis units for First Nations people in regional and remote Australia with end-stage kidney disease.
 - Death rates for Indigenous females are higher than Indigenous males for kidney disease and diabetes.⁵
- \$1.4 million over two years from 2023–24 to expand the delivery of the Strong Born campaign which provides information about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) to First Nations peoples
- Key measures in the October 2022-23 Budget included:
 - \$22.5 million over three years to establish a dedicated Birthing on Country Centre of Excellence at Nowra on the NSW south coast, to provide culturally safe and appropriate maternity services to First Nations women.
 - \$14.2 million over three years of additional support for Rheumatic Heart Disease treatment, detection and prevention activities in high-risk First Nations communities.
 - Rheumatic Heart Disease disproportionately affects First Nations women and girls. In 2020, 67 per cent of patients receiving a rheumatic heart disease diagnosis were female⁶.

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Health Performance Framework – Summary Report 2023

⁶ [Acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in Australia, 2016–2020, Data - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/data-reports/acute-rheumatic-fever-and-rheumatic-heart-disease-in-australia-2016-2020)

Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices)

- The Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Project, led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO, is a multi-year initiative designed to elevate the voices of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander women and girls. The project is in its third and final stage of delivery.
- \$5.7 million has been provided to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) to deliver the three stages of the project.
 - Stage One (Complete): National consultation and report delivery (2016-17 to 2020-21)
 - Stage Two (Complete): Report dissemination and additional dialogues (2019-20 to 2020-21)
 - Stage Three (In progress): Implementation (2021-22 to 2023-24)
- The AHRC are currently working on a final deliverable, the National Framework for Action.
 - OFW Assistant Secretary Gender Equality Strategy and Reform Branch, Clancie Hall was invited to represent OFW as a Government representative on the AHRC National Framework for Action Advisory Group.
- The outcomes of the project will be integrated into a new First Nations Gender Justice institute to be established at ANU and headed by June Oscar following her completion of her current role as Commissioner.
 - s 47G(1)(a)
- The Framework for Action and Gender Justice Institute are expected to be launched around International Women's Day 2024.

Senate inquiry into Missing and Murdered First Nations women and children

- On 4 August 2022, the Senate referred an inquiry into missing and murdered First Nations women and children to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee.
 - On 3 August 2023, the Committees reporting date was extended to 30 June 2024.
- As part of the May 2023-24 Budget, the Government announced it will undertake an initial review to inform the development of a national standard for government data on lost, missing, or murdered First Nations women and children.

Detailed questions about the Government Response should be directed to the AGD and NIAA.

Closing the Gap

- The 2023 Closing the Gap Implementation Plan recognises the distinct needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls that should be considered in developing responses to achieve better outcomes, particularly in the areas of safety and justice, health and wellbeing, education, economic security, land, housing, employment, training and business.
 - OFW contributes to the Closing the Gap Annual Report and Commonwealth Implementation Plan, led by NIAA.
 - OFW reports on the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality, gender responsive budgeting and the Women's Leadership and Development Program.
- On 12 July 2023, the Productivity Commission released its annual data compilation report. Of the 19 national targets (across the 17 socio-economic outcome areas), 15 had an assessment of progress, and of these only four were on track to be met (targets 3, 8, 11 and 15A), with the remaining 11 'not on track' (targets 1, 2, 4, 5–7, 9A, 10, 12, and 14 and 15B).
- Target 13 of Closing the Gap specifically focuses on improving First Nation women's safety:
 - Nationally in 2018-19, 8.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females aged 15 years and over experienced domestic physical or threatened physical harm.
 - There has been no new data since the baseline year of 2018-19 to assess progress.
 - The Department of Social Services and the National Indigenous Australians Agency are working towards a data solution that is Indigenous-led, culturally safe and culturally appropriate.
- All Closing the Gap targets include the collection of gender disaggregated data (except for target 15 focussed on legal rights to land and sea). The inclusion of gender disaggregated data on all relevant targets will help us to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
 - The sex disaggregated data of statistical significance (5 % points or more) included that:
 - A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (71.7 per cent) than males (64.5 per cent) aged 20-24 years had attained their Year 12 equivalent qualification.
 - A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (50.6 per cent) than males (43.3 per cent) aged 25-34

years had attained their non-school qualifications at Certificate III or above.

- Across five states and territories combined (NSW, Qld, WA, SA, NT) the rate of suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men was 2.4 times the rate of women.
- Closing the Gap – Further Investment: The Government has committed \$492.7m over five years from 2022-23 for a range of measures to support critical investment in infrastructure, employment, justice, education and housing initiatives for First Nations people.

Detailed questions about Closing the Gap should be directed to NIAA and Social Policy Division- First Nations Branch PM&C.

Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP)

- A total of \$29,626,044 (GST exclusive) over 2020-21 to 2026-27, spanning 30 projects, has been committed to project which support First Nations women through the WLDP.
- This includes a range of job creation and skills building projects that support and enable First Nations women to become financially independent and where relevant support them to exit violent environments, relationships and situations.
- \$2,772,268 million is being provided to Tranby Aboriginal Co-Operative Limited over four years (2022-23 to 2025-26) to deliver the Yanalangami Strong Women, Strong Communities Program.
 - The program will address the systemic barriers faced by First Nation's women; strengthen networks and leadership capacity; improve women's safety; and enhance workforce participation and entrepreneurship through professional upskilling.
 - An estimated 330 First Nations women are expected to benefit from the program.
- OFW manage the relationship with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA).
 - NATSIWA is funded under the WLDP to ensure the voices of First Nations women and girls are heard in the policy making process.
 - WLDP committed \$993,015 over 2021-22 to 2024-25 for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA).
 - Indexation will be applied in line with the Wage Cost Index once the rate is formalised in the May 2024-25 Budget.

Projects <u>specifically tailored</u> for First Nations Women (12 grants)	Projects designed for <u>multiple diverse cohorts</u> incl. First Nations Women (18 grants)
1. ABC Foundation - \$389,373	13. Australian Institute of Company Directors - \$773,804
2. Bungala Aboriginal Corporation – \$240,000	14. Accessible Arts - \$355,600
3. CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes - \$689,870	15. Active Refugee and Migrant Integration in Australia - \$300,000
4. Children's Ground - \$793,829	16. Business and Professional Women's Association Darwin - \$45,000
5. First Nations Foundation - \$797,988	17. Centre for Women & Co. - \$699,000
6. Indigenous Employment Partners - \$798,000 (<i>Note: grant has ended</i>)	18. Collingwood Football Club - \$300,000
7. Kalyuku Ninti - Puntuku Ngurra - \$795,654	19. Global Sisters - \$3,000,000
8. Murawin - \$777,399	20. Habitat for Humanity Australia - \$788,458
9. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre - \$800,000	21. Jordan River Service - \$381,969

Projects <u>specifically tailored</u> for First Nations Women (12 grants)	Projects designed for <u>multiple diverse cohorts</u> incl. First Nations Women (18 grants)
<p>10. National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (Indigenous Corp) - \$865,552</p> <p>11. Tranby Aboriginal Co-operative - \$2,772,268</p> <p>12. World Vision Australia - \$598,971</p>	<p>22. Medical Research Commercialisation Fund - \$945,602</p> <p>23. Our Community - \$227,500</p> <p>24. Southcare - \$473,490</p> <p>25. South East Local Learning Employment Network - \$800,000</p> <p>26. Spacecubed Ventures - \$608,420</p> <p>27. The Australian Power Institute - \$888, 221</p> <p>28. Whittlesea Community Connections Inc - \$358,076</p> <p>29. Women for Election Australia - \$5,000,000</p> <p>30. Women in Seafood Australasia - \$3,362,000</p>
Total: \$10,318,904	Total: \$ 19,307,140

Key facts and figures

• Workforce Participation

- In 2021, 53.8 per cent of First Nations women (aged 25-64) were employed compared to 73.9 per cent of non-Indigenous Australian women (gap of 20.1%).⁷
 - The Closing the Gap Target 8 (By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-64 who are employed to 62) is tracked by employment rates. This target is on track to being met.
- First Nations women are paid less, on average, than First Nations men, being over-represented in most of the lower weekly income brackets and under-represented in the highest income brackets.⁸
- Indigenous focused job postings are highly concentrated in three Industry divisions (public administration and safety, healthcare and social assistance and education and training), one major occupation group (community and personal service workers) and one state (Western Australia).
 - Identified roles tend to be low skill and low wage roles.⁹
- Only one in four First Nations women said they feel supported when they experienced racism at work.¹⁰

• Safety

- First Nations women and girls 15 years and over are 33 times more likely to be hospitalised due to assaults related to family violence than non-Indigenous women and girls (8 per 1,000 compared to 0.2 per 1,000).¹¹
- In 2020-21, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were killed at a rate 5.7 times higher than other Australian women from family violence.¹²
- In 2018-19, 8.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females aged 15 years and over experienced domestic physical or threatened physical harm.¹³
 - CTG target 13: By 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero. No data since 2018-19.
- 71 per cent of First Nations women experience physical violence in their lifetime and three times as many First Nations women reported sexual violence than non-Indigenous women.¹⁴

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census of Population and Housing

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) '2011.0 - Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia - Stories from the Census, 2016', ABS.

⁹ Mason, Claire M., et al. "Employers' Job Advertisements: Are They Addressing or Entrenching Indigenous Labour Market Segmentation?." SocArXiv, 24 July 2023.

¹⁰ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2021) 'Gari Yala (Speak the Truth): Gendered Insights,' WGEA.

¹¹ Womens Budget Statement pg 42

¹² Womens Budget Statement pg 42

¹³ Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Target 13

¹⁴ Patty Kinnersly, Our Watch CEO (2022) 'The factors putting First Nations women in danger', *The Age*. [Australia Day: The factors putting First Nations women in danger \(theage.com.au\)](https://www.theage.com.au/news/first-nations-women-in-danger/2022/07/27)

- *Misidentification of the victim-survivor as the predominant aggressor in family domestic violence situation is widely reported.*¹⁵
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were more likely to have experienced workplace sexual harassment than people who are non-Indigenous (53% and 32% respectively) – Respect@Work*¹⁶
- **Health**
 - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females born in 2015-2017 are expected to live to 75.6 years compared to 83.4 years for non-Indigenous females, a gap in life expectancy of 7.8 years.*¹⁷
 - *CTG Target 1: Close the Gap in Life expectancy within a generation, by 2031. Not on track to being met.*
- **Leadership**
 - *The Truth Be Told: Cultural Diversity on Australian Boards report showed that while Gender Balance was achieved across five sectors, with 46% female directors overall, only 12.8 per cent of board members are non-Anglo Celtic. Of this approximately three per cent are Indigenous (1.6% were Indigenous women).*¹⁸
- **Justice**
 - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are the fastest growing prisoner population, constituting 37 per cent of the female prison population, despite making up only 2 per cent of Australia's total population.*¹⁹
 - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women 19 times more likely to be in prison than non-Indigenous women.*²⁰
 - *CTG Target 10: Reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent. Not on track.*
- **Housing**
 - *First Nations women are at particular risk of homelessness. Women comprise 61 per cent of the 73,000 Indigenous users of specialist homelessness services.*²¹
 - *31 per cent of Indigenous women reported experiencing homelessness between 2015 and 2020, compared to 12 per cent of non-Indigenous women.*²²
 - *Nationally in 2021, 81.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were living in appropriately sized housing.*²³
 - *CTG Target 9: Increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88 per cent. Not on track.*

¹⁵ Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (2021) 'Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms Accurate identification of the predominant aggressor,' Victorian Government

¹⁶ Australian Human Rights Commission, Everyone's Business: Fourth National Survey on Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces (2018) 8.

¹⁷ ABS, Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 2015-2017

¹⁸ Women on Boards, The Truth Be Told: Cultural Diversity on Australian Boards report, November 2022

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) 'Corrective Services, Australia,' ABS.

²⁰ Australian Human Rights Commission, Australia's criminal justice system, 2021

²¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) 'Specialist homelessness services annual report 2020-21.

²² YWCA National Housing (2020) 'Women's Housing Needs in Regional Australia,' Melbourne, Victoria.

²³ Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Target 9.

ATTACHMENT A

2023-24 May Budget

Budget Package	Key Initiatives for women and girls (non-exhaustive)
<u>Alice Springs – Central Australia Package (announced January 2023)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$48.8 million over two years from 2022-23 to improve community safety in Alice Springs. (NIAA) 	<p>\$5.6 million in 2023-24 for additional emergency accommodation and safe places in Alice Springs</p> <p>\$2.0 million over two years from 2022-23 to boost domestic violence services through the Tangentyere Women's Council</p>
<u>Better, Safer Future for Central Australia - \$250 million package (Feb 2023)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$155.9 million over five years from 2022-23 as part of the \$250 million package to support the <i>Better, Safer Future for Central Australia plan</i> + 94.1 million contingency reserve for future measures following consultation with First Nations organisations and communities. (NIAA) 	<p>\$23.5 million over four years from 2022-23 to expand the Child & Youth Assessment & Treatment Service and support the development of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation's Health Hub in Alice Springs</p> <p>\$9.2 million over three years from 2023-24 to address community safety and early intervention projects for First Nations peoples in Central Australia.</p> <p>\$3.9 million over three years from 2023-24 for the development of a Youth Services Action Plan for Central Australia.</p>
<u>Women's Safety</u> 262.6 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$194 million over five years from 2022-23 (and \$4.0 million in 2027-28) to support the dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan. (DSS) \$68.6 million to support Family Violence Prevention Legal Services. (AGD, NIAA) 	<p>\$145.3 million over 4 years from 2023–24, including a provision of \$128.6 million in the Contingency Reserve, to support activities which address immediate safety concerns for First Nations women and children who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, family, and domestic and sexual violence</p> <p>\$23.2 million over 4 years from 2023–24 to support families impacted by violence and at risk of engaging in the child protection system, through delivery of 7 place-based, trauma-aware and culturally responsive healing programs aimed at early intervention and recovery and supporting families</p> <p>\$17.6 million over two years from 2023–24 to deliver on family safety initiatives under the Action Plan</p> <p>\$7.8 million over 5 years from 2022–23 (and \$4.0 million in 2027–28) to support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan for Family Safety, including governance, secretariat and data arrangements</p>
<u>First Nations Health</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$363.1 million over four years from 2023-24 to support the Government's commitment to close the gap in First Nations peoples' health and wellbeing outcomes. (Health) 	<p>Extending existing alcohol and drug treatment in communities, including \$3.5 million to The Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women.</p> <p>\$238.5 million over 4 years from 2023–24 to improve First Nations cancer outcomes through building capability and growing the healthcare workforce to improve screening and prevention activities, coordination, access support and research and data collection</p>

	<p>\$77.3 million over 4 years from 2023–24 to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in aged care</p> <p>\$28.2 million over three years from 2023-24 for workforce accommodation to support the delivery of 30 dialysis units for First Nations people in regional and remote Australia with end-stage kidney disease</p> <p>\$1.4 million over two years from 2023–24 to expand the delivery of the Strong Born campaign which provides information about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder to First Nations peoples</p>
<p><u>Closing the Gap</u></p> <p>\$492.7 million over five years from 2022-23 (and \$45.1 million over eight years to 2031-32) for a range of measures to support critical investment in infrastructure, employment, justice, education and housing initiatives for First Nations people. (NIAA)</p>	<p>\$111.7 million in 2023-24 for a new one-year partnership with the NT Government to accelerate building of new remote housing to reduce overcrowding.</p> <p>\$38.4 million over four years from 2023-24 to improve access to better education and address learning gaps in First Nations primary and secondary education through culturally appropriate distance learning and expanding the on-country junior ranger program.</p> <p>\$14.1 million over two years from 2022-23 for a two-year partnership with the NT Government and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern territory to enhance and develop activities supporting community safety and social emotional wellbeing on alcohol and drug use.</p> <p>\$11.8 million over two years from 2023-24 to address food security barrier by progressing improvements in accessing affordable food and other essential items in remote First Nations communities.</p>

2022-23 October Budget

<p><u>Voice to Parliament</u></p> <p>(Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA))</p>	<p>\$75.1 million over two years from 2022-23 to prepare for the referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Constitution.</p>
<p><u>Makarrata Commission</u></p> <p>(NIAA)</p>	<p>\$5.8 million over three years from 2022-23 to commence work on establishing an independent Makarrata Commission to oversee processes for agreement making and truth telling. This is part of the Government's \$27.7 million election commitment to establish a Makarrata Commission.</p>
<p><u>Health and Wellbeing</u></p> <p>(Department of Health and Aged Care, Australian Sports Commission and NIAA)</p>	<p>\$314.8 million over five years from 2022-23 to support the Government's commitment to close the gap for First Nations peoples' health and wellbeing outcomes, including:</p> <p>\$54.3 million over 5 years from 2022-23 to deliver up to 500 First Nations Certificate III and IV traineeships in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care.</p>

	<p>\$22.5 million over three years to establish a dedicated Birthing on Country Centre of Excellence at Nowra on the NSW south coast, to provide culturally safe and appropriate maternity services to First Nations women.</p> <p>\$14.2 million over three years of additional support for Rheumatic Heart Disease treatment, detection and prevention activities in high-risk First Nations communities.</p>
<u>Front Line Workers</u> (Department of Treasury (Treasury) and Department of Social Services (DSS))	<p>\$169.4 million over four years from 2022-23 for an additional 500 Frontline Service and Community Workers to support women and children experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence, ensuring First Nations women and children are a priority cohort.</p>
<u>First Nations Justice</u> (Attorney-General's Department (AGD), Treasury, NIAA)	<p>\$99.0 million over four years from 2022-23 to improve justice outcomes for First Nations peoples, including \$3 million for the National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum to deliver legal and non-legal support to First Nations communities.</p>
<u>First Nations Housing</u> (Treasury and NIAA)	<p>\$25 million for housing and essential services on Northern Territory homelands, with a further \$75 million allocated for 2023-24, as well as \$200 million for the repair, maintenance and improvements of housing in remote First Nations communities.</p>
<u>Education</u>	<p>\$43.9 million over four years from 2022-23 for measures that support the National Agreement on Closing the Gap targets and improve early childhood outcomes for First Nations children, including;</p> <p>\$33.7 million over four years from 2022-23 to introduce a base entitlement to 36 hours per fortnight of subsidised early childhood education and care for families with First Nations children, regardless of activity hours or income level.</p> <p>\$10.2 million over three years from 2022-23 to establish the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership with Coalition of Peaks partners and First Nations representatives to develop policies on First Nations early childhood education and care.</p>
<p>The 2022-23 October Budget retained the \$27.8 million in funding from the 2022-23 March Budget to deliver key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Services while the Action Plan is being finalised.</p>	<p>It also retained the \$10.7 million funding for the Northern Territory under the National Partnership in recognition of the high rates of domestic and family violence and the complexities around delivering support services in remote parts of the Territory.</p> <p>Funding supports a range of organisations and services across the Northern Territory including family, domestic and sexual violence helplines, housing and accommodation services, specialist support services for children and perpetrator interventions and men's behaviour change programs.</p>

Gender Definition

Subject/Issue

The definition of gender has evolved over time, and has been the subject of ongoing public commentary.

Key points

- OFW's use of the word 'woman' includes all persons who identify as women, whether or not they were assigned a female sex at birth.
- OFW takes this approach because people who identify as a woman experience different and intersecting barriers to gender equality, and this requires targeted responses.
 - This is consistent with other parts of the public service, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
- The *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender* were developed to assist departments and agencies to meet their obligations under the Sex Discrimination Act.
 - The Guidelines commenced on 1 July 2013 with Australian government departments and agencies to be compliant with the Guidelines by 1 July 2016.
- The Guidelines recognise that individuals may identify and be recognised within the community as a gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth or during infancy, or as a gender which is not exclusively male or female.
- There have been no updates to the current version of the Guidelines since 2015.
 - The decision to update the Guidelines is a matter for government.
- The ABS released its new *Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables 2020* in January 2021.
 - The ABS Standard was informed by the 2013 Guidelines but has incorporated developments to appropriate terminology and language.
 - The ABS Standard states that "gender is about social and cultural differences in identity, expression and experience as a man, woman or non-binary person. A person's gender may differ from their sex and may also differ from what is indicated on their legal documents".
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex status in many areas of

public life, including employment, education and in the provision of goods, services and facilities.

- The issue of gender identity is sensitive and requires careful treatment to avoid negatively impacting individuals in the community who may already experience exclusion and discrimination based on their gender identity.

For questions on Equality Rights Australia's position on transgender women, refer to the Grants and Alliances LTB.

Key facts and figures

- Transgender people, gender diverse and non-binary people experience physical and sexual assault, abuse, discrimination and homelessness at much higher rates than cis gender people.
 - More than 50 per cent of transgender and gender diverse people in Australia report experiencing sexual violence or coercion, compared with 13.3 per cent of the general population.
- Transgender and gender diverse people also experience significantly high rates of mental health impacts:
 - 73 per cent report a lifetime diagnosis of depression;
 - 67 per cent report anxiety;
 - 63 per cent report previous self-harm; and
 - 43 per cent report they have attempted suicide.
- Ensuring policy achieves its intended goals requires a nuanced application of a gender lens.
 - For example, initiatives related to health may require consideration of biology, whereas employment and economic security activities can take a more inclusive approach.

Background

Guiding Documents from other Government Departments

- *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender* commenced in July 2013 and applies to all Australian Government departments and agencies that maintain personal records (including employee records), and/or collect sex and/or gender information.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released its new *Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables 2020* in January 2021.
 - The Standard can be used by government, academic and private sector organisations in their statistical collections to improve the comparability and quality of data when collecting statistics.
 - Office for Women promotes the use of the ABS Standard for collection of gender-disaggregated data.
 - The Standard was used by ABS to collect non-binary sex data for the first time in the 2021 Census.

Department of Health representations at Senate Estimates

In the 2022-23 Budget Estimates round (April 2022), the Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care took a question on notice (QoN 21) from Senator Alex Antic on the 'definition of a woman'. The Department provided the following formal response:

'The frameworks adopted to define a person's gender include chromosomal makeup, the gender assigned at birth, and the gender with which a person identifies.

The Department of Health does not adopt a single definition. Health policies and access to health programs are based on clinical evidence and clinical need for all Australians, regardless of gender identity, biological characteristics, or genetic variations. Our programs are designed to be inclusive and to provide better health and wellbeing for all Australians'.

PM Albanese public commentary

In May 2023, Prime Minister the Hon Anthony Albanese MP stated in an interview with Sky News presenter Piers Morgan the definition of a woman is "an adult female". This was the same answer he provided during a leaders debate for the 2022 federal election campaign. An excerpt of the interview is below:

TRANSCRIPT - 03 May 2023 - Prime Minister's interview with Piers Morgan

MORGAN: The issue that got him [Barry Humphries] into hot water was this issue of gender identity. He was defending JK Rowling. The New Zealand Prime Minister, Chris Hipkins was asked to define a woman and he said, 'Well, people identify for themselves'. He couldn't answer. It was excruciating, to watch to be honest with you. And this has been a sort of hot potato question for world leaders. Some of them seem incapable, including Keir Starmer here. What is a woman, Prime Minister?

PRIME MINISTER: **An adult female.**

MORGAN: How difficult was that to answer?

PRIME MINISTER: Not too hard. I was asked during the campaign, actually. But I **respect people for whoever they are. And it's up to people to be respectful.** And I know that controversy can come at times like that, and I'm not a fan of some of, the campaign - there was recently a very controversial visit in Australia that was designed to stir up issues. And young people coming to terms with their identity and who they are, I think that they need to be respected as well.

MORGAN: But what would you do, for example, with this issue of transgender athletes in women's sport? Which many world or sporting authorities are now well now beginning to move to exclude them? Because they say it's simply not fair?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, that's an example in that the sporting organisations are dealing with that issue.

MORGAN: And what's your view?

PRIME MINISTER: My view is that sporting organisations should deal with that issue.

...

MORGAN: Are you ducking it?

PRIME MINISTER: No I'm not. I'm saying that what shouldn't be done is to try to politicise an issue that should be made on its merits, based upon the proper assessment of whether it's fair or not, but done in a way as well, that doesn't seek to essentially target a very vulnerable group, and that's my concern.

MORGAN: I don't think they should be demonised in any way.

PRIME MINISTER: That's my concern.

MORGAN: I get that. But I think there's also, there are serious issues which have to be addressed.

PRIME MINISTER: Of course they are, **but it should be done without the targeting of a vulnerable group of people. And that's my view, that people should be respected.** The sporting codes are dealing with it. And what occurred when this debate happened in Australia, is the sporting codes said themselves, 'We're dealing with this, we don't need this to be politicised'. And we don't need politicians buying into it.

APS Capability

Subject

OFW is supporting initial Australian Public Service (APS) gender analysis capability uplift to support full roll out of GRB by providing guidance and training resources.

Key points

- OFW sought early opportunities to develop capability to ensure GRB could begin roll-out as soon as possible after piloting in the October 2022-23 and 2023-24 Budgets.
- Capability efforts to date include:
 - Producing and publishing guidance and templates detailing the process and purpose of gender analysis in the 2023-24 MYEFO process;
 - OFW funded 78 participants to undertake a gender analysis short course (one day equivalent), created and convened by the ANU Crawford School of Public Policy and Professor Miranda Stewart, Dr Leonora Risse and Dr Elise Klein;
 - Delivering 16 presentations on GRB across the APS, another 4 are scheduled before the end of MYEFO;
 - Hosting 17 secondees from other departments to build capability and share knowledge across the service.
- We are working with the APSC and APS Academy regarding ongoing gender analysis capability offerings.
 - As a first step, agencies with responsibility for impact assessment (incl. PM&C, DCCEEW, DITRDCA, NIAA) will present a master class through the APS Academy later this year. Response to the master class will be useful intelligence for our capability development work.
 - While OFW is leading work to support initial uplift of capability, it is ultimately the responsibility of all departments to ensure they have the skills and capabilities required to deliver robust gender analysis.

Key work underway

Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment

- On 11 August 2023 guidance was distributed to the APS, detailing the process and purpose of gender analysis in the 2023-24 MYEFO process.
 - **Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessments** (the Guide), an updated Gender Impact Assessment **Template** and a **Quick Reference** Guide. All documents are available on the PM&C website.
 - The Guide was also distributed directly to departments. Each department's Communications, Budget and Cabinet liaison teams received the Guide and were asked to circulate it widely.
 - The Guide was developed to support the roll out of GRB across the Budget from the 2023-24 MYEFO process.
 - OFW prioritised development of the Guide to ensure that departments had assistance for the new GRB requirements.
 - The approach to the Guide was informed by the GRB pilots in the October 2022-23 and 2023-34 Budgets. For example, queries from departments to OFW about methods and process, and sourcing data and evidence for gender analysis.
 - The Guide was developed by OFW using existing staff and resources, with graphic design and online publication of the Guide provided by the PM&C Communications Branch.
 - OFW consulted a number of key Government stakeholders in drafting the Guide, including PM&C's Cabinet Division, the Treasury, and the Department of Finance.
 - The Guide will be reviewed and revised, as needed, for each Budget process to ensure it remains current and provides relevant advice on gender analysis and good practice.

Gender Awareness E-learning

- OFW has engaged The Equality Institute to deliver a pilot Gender Equality Awareness Foundations e-learning course.
 - The online course will provide an introduction to key concepts which underpin gender analysis, such as understanding ways in which gender norms contribute to inequality.

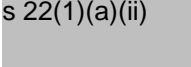
- The course is aimed at APS staff with limited background or understanding of gender issues. It will be trialled with up to 3,000 APS staff from late 2023 onwards and evaluated to inform future training.

NextGEN: Policy for a Gender Equal Nation project (Capability Reinvestment Fund Project)

- OFW is leading a project to co-design resources that will build deeper APS gender analysis capability and support departments to implement GRB. The project will deliver resources that will:
 - Build the capability of individual APS staff. For example, practical resources to support the guide to gender analysis, templates, case studies and using data and evidence to support analysis.
 - Enable departments to assess their own readiness and progress in implementing GRB, and incorporate into their strategic planning.

APSC Micro-credential Project (Capability Reinvestment Fund Project)

- The measure **APSC Micro-Credential** under the Capability Reinvestment Fund provided \$91,000 in 2023-24 for OFW to support the APSC to develop a gender analysis micro-credential.
 - APSC received 6 proposals to develop a gender-specific micro-credential.
 - OFW reviewed the proposals as a member of the APSC's subject matter expert group and did not participate in the assessment panel.
 - The assessment panel was responsible for evaluating proposals for micro-credentials on multiple subjects.
 - A micro-credential is a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum of one hour but less than an award qualification (such as a tertiary unit of study).
 - The gender analysis micro-credential will involve 40-60 hours of study over 6-8 weeks at a post-graduate level and will be relevant to a wide range of APS roles.
 - Participants will develop deep understanding of how gender and other intersectional factors impact on equality and policy outcomes. Learners will develop skills in how to apply gender disaggregated data and evidence to inform policy options.
- APSC Micro credential course is led by APSC. Detailed questions should be directed to the APSC.
- Project details in Attachment A, including expenditure, procurement and timing.

Date: 17 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Clancie Hall
Branch/Section: GESR / Capability
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: 
Consultation: APSC re micro-credential; APS Academy, DCCEEW, NIAA, DIRDTCA

Attachment A: Capability Projects Overview

Project	Delivery	Contract & funding	Key facts & procurement
Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessments COMPLETED Comprehensive written guidance outlining the principles, processes and purpose of gender analysis.	August 2023	Developed in house by OFW and PM&C Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes instructions on how to: apply GIA criteria, undertake analysis and prepare a GIA. PM&C website hosts Guide, Template and Quick Reference, and overview of Gender Responsive Budgeting
Gender analysis course COMPLETED Targeted training to develop understanding of theoretical underpinnings and skills in gender analysis GIA. For staff in PM&C, Treasury and Finance who have a pivotal role in guiding policy proposals through the Budget process, as well as other departments with a strong interest.	Jun–Aug 2023	CON number: CD CD011587 Supplier: ANU Crawford School of Public Policy Executive Education Value: \$69,940 ex GST or \$76,934 inc GST Duration: April 2023 to November 2023 Source: October 2022-23 Budget - \$350k capability funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited Tender (direct source) under \$80k. Crawford revised training previously developed by Professor Miranda Stewart’s—saving cost and time while drawing on expert material. Course developed and delivered by leading academics: Professor Stewart, Dr Leonora Risse and Dr Elise Klein Online delivery June – August 2023, 78 participants from 8 depts: PM&C, Treasury, Finance, DSS, NIAA, DAFF, DISR, Education and DEWR. Course was targeted to staff with a key role in policy and Budget processes. Cost \$932 per head, less two-thirds of standard fee of \$1495. Evaluation findings were positive and respondents offered considered feedback and suggestions for improvement. Highlights include that the course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> largely met the expectations of the participants (67%) was engaging (79%) and relevant (79%) encouraged new ways of thinking (78%) provided with skills relevant to their work (76%)

Project	Delivery	Contract & funding	Key facts & procurement
<p>APS Gender Analysis Capability Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GROSVENOR CONTRACT COMPLETED • COMPLETED STAGE 1 OF FRAMEWORK <p>Guidance for APS on skills and knowledge required to deliver quality gender analysis. Will provide a whole of APS framework and agencies will assess and develop the required capabilities.</p> <p>Next step: testing with departments</p>	From late 2023	<p>CON number: CD011556</p> <p>Supplier: Grosvenor Performance Group</p> <p>Value: \$130,984 ex GST or \$143,984 inc GST</p> <p>Duration: April – 30 June 2023</p> <p>Source: October 2022-23 Budget - \$350k capability funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive tender using the Digital Market Place panel (Change Management category). • Four suppliers approached, 3 quotes received. • Quotes reviewed by 3 person evaluation committee including OFW and PMC Capability staff. • Grosvenor represented the best value for money due to their demonstrated expertise in capability development (such as working on APSC on APS craft) and total cost. • The framework was developed in consultation with the APSC and other key stakeholders. Key stakeholders contributed, including the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), APS Reform Office, BETA and NextGEN project partners (DEWR and Education).
<p>Gender Awareness e-learning</p> <p>UNDERWAY</p> <p>A 1 hour online training course introducing basic concepts of gender, equality, intersectionality and their relationship to policy-making.</p> <p>The course will be piloted with up to 3000 APS staff from late 2023.</p> <p>Next step: upload to APS Learn platform and promote to departments.</p>	From late 2023	<p>CON number: CD011557</p> <p>Supplier: The Equality Institute</p> <p>Value: \$96,400 ex GST or \$106,040 inc GST</p> <p>Duration: April 2023 to 30 June 2024</p> <p>Source: October 2022-23 Budget - \$350k capability funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Tender (direct source) using Small to Medium Enterprise exemption. • Market research found no suitable suppliers on existing panels and limited options in the market. • Equality Institute offered a unique combination of expertise in gender analysis implementation (through work with Vic State gov) and online training delivery. • Equality Institute had an existing product informed by research, tested with a numerous organisations and readily adaptable for the APS enabling a lower cost and more rapid deployment of training than starting from scratch. • The cost equates to \$30 per participant, which market research indicated was consistent with comparable services.
<p>APSC Micro-credential</p> <p>UNDERWAY</p> <p>A short course in Gender Analysis (40-60 hours) equivalent to a part of post-grad tertiary unit. To be developed by a tertiary education provider (university).</p> <p>Next step: to be advised by APSC</p>	APSC will announce result of procurement shortly.	<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$816,000 ex GST total • \$91,000 (0.5FTE) for OFW <p>Duration: 1 July 2023–30 June 2024</p> <p>Source: 2023-24 Budget- APS Capability Reinvestment Fund</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project led by APSC • OFW funded to partner on the project and provide gender analysis expertise. • APSC led procurement to develop and deliver the course. • Gender credential was one of 3 in the APSC’s procurement process.

Project	Delivery	Contract & funding	Key facts & procurement
<p>NextGEN: Policy for a Gender Equal Nation UNDERWAY</p> <p>Co-designed project with DEWR and Education to develop gender analysis resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building the capability of individual APS staff, including use of data and evidence Ensuring departments are equipped to support gender analysis. Ensuring gender analysis is underpinned by a strong evidence and data base. <p>Next step: procure expertise to assist with resource development</p>	<p>Project runs 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024</p>	<p>Funding: \$1,340,000 ex GST total Duration: 1 July 2023-30 June 2024 Source: 2023-24 Budget- APS Capability Reinvestment Fund</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OFW received \$970,000 total: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$570,000 for staff (2.5 FTE). \$350,000 suppliers (expertise to be procured). \$50,000 for travel and admin. \$370,000 total to DEWR and Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$185,000 each, 1 FTE each Resources will be co-designed with policy practitioners and experts then made available to the whole APS progressively in the 2024-25 Budget cycle. Three workshops held to date. First Steering committee meeting will be held 30 October 2023.
<p>Secondment to OFW pilot program UNDERWAY</p> <p>Application based program available to APS staff: 3-12 month OFW placements to build gender analysis capability to share with home agency and broaden perspectives and expertise in OFW.</p>	<p>First Round October 2022, Second Round May 2023</p>	<p>OFW BAU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See also: <u>Key Functions and Resourcing brief</u>. Round One commenced from October 2022, applicants were sought at an EL1/EL2 level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight secondments and one temporary transfer from 7 agencies (Home Affairs; Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Defence; Industry, Science and Resources; Foreign Affairs & Trade; Social Services; and Treasury). Round Two commenced from May 2023, and applicants were sought at the APS 4–6 level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nine secondments from 6 agencies (Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; Veterans' Affairs; Home Affairs; Finance; Social Services; and Federal Court).
<p>Departmental information sessions UNDERWAY</p> <p>OFW online briefings to provide overview of the guide, GIA process and developing good quality analysis.</p>	<p>From August 2023</p>	<p>OFW BAU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email covering distribution of the Guide offered information sessions and asked departments to email OFW Capability team to arrange. At 17 October 2023 16 presentations have been delivered to OFW, PM&C (PIP, SPG, Cabinet Division, Fiscal Policy), APSC, DISR, DEWR, DCCEEW, DHAC, DAFF, Education, NIAA, DFAT and Crawford course participants. Upcoming presentation to Fiscal Policy, ASEAN Taskforce, Net Zero plan drafters, DSS disability proposal drafters. No dates confirmed.

Comm-State Engagement

Subject/Issue

Office for Women (OFW) provide the secretariat function for the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (the Council) and coordinate regular meetings for the Offices for Women (MoOFW) across jurisdictions.

Key points

Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council

- The Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council is a forum for the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to drive shared progress on gender equality and women's safety (*refer to Attachment A for Terms of Reference*).
- The Council consists of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for women and women's safety policy.
 - There are currently 15 members of the Council (*refer to Attachment B for membership*).
 - The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, Micaela Cronin, is an ex-officio member of the Council.
- The Council meets a minimum of three times per year, with the next meeting of the Council is scheduled for 24 November 2023 [TBC].
- In March 2023, the Council agreed to three key priorities of focus as part of its work plan:
 - **Increase gender balance across the labour market.** This was tasked to the Council by National Cabinet as a productivity priority.
 - Implementation of this tasking is complex and the Women's Economic Opportunities Senior Officials Working Group (WEO-SOWG), which sits under the Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR), are also completing work on gender balance across the labour market.
 - It is expected that the WWSMC will be updated on this work in early 2024 to ensure both Councils work collaboratively to deliver on this priority.
 - Driving work on the National Cabinet commitment to **provide public sector workforce data to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)**;

- Progress against this priority is under way, with all states and territories agreeing to work with WGEA to provide de-identified employee level data to ensure a robust national data set on gender equality.
- Implementation of the ***National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (National Plan)***;
 - Progress against this priority is under way, with the Council's shared commitment to leading and progressing the work needed through the action plans, launched on 16 August 2023, to ensure the outcomes of the National Plan are achieved.
- The Council will report to National Cabinet on progress against these priorities in early 2024.
- The Council works with a number of other Ministerial Councils and key stakeholders to drive progress against its priorities (*refer to Attachment C for a list of relationships*).

Questions regarding forums that the Council collaborates with should be addressed to the relevant department.

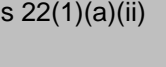
Meeting for the Offices for Women

- OFW facilitates monthly meetings with senior officials responsible for women's portfolios in each jurisdiction to support strong collaborative relationships between the Commonwealth, and state and territory governments on gender equality policy.
- The meeting provides an informal forum to share information, lessons learnt and best practice approaches to achieve gender equality across jurisdictions and the Commonwealth.

Background

Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council

- On 30 September 2022, National Cabinet established the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council as part of a renewed federal relations architecture.
 - The Council subsumed the duties of the former National Federal Reform Council's Taskforce on Women's Safety.
- The Council is co-chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Women and the Minister for Social Services, and consists of Ministers responsible for women and women's safety portfolios from state and territory governments.
- The Council meets a minimum of three times per year, with extraordinary meetings able to be scheduled where required.
- The inaugural meeting of the Council was held on 17 March 2023, with a second meeting held on 28 July. A third meeting is likely to happen before the end of 2023.
- The meeting communique is publicly available following each meeting of the Council.
- The Secretariat for the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council is housed within the Commonwealth OFW.

Date: 3 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: Social Policy and International Engagement Branch
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: 
Consultation: Nil

Attachment A - Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council Terms of Reference

Authority	On 30 September 2022, National Cabinet agreed to the recommendations of the First Secretaries Group Review of Ministerial Councils. This included the formal establishment of the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (the Council) as part of a renewed federal relations architecture.
Purpose	The Council provides a forum for member governments to drive national progress on gender equality and women's safety across all areas in ending violence against women and children within Australia.
Membership	<p>The Council consists of Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers responsible for women and women's safety. Each jurisdiction is represented by a maximum of three Ministers with portfolio responsibility for women, families and/or prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence.</p> <p>The Council is co-chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Women and the Commonwealth Minister for Social Services.</p> <p>The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner is an ex-officio observer on the Ministerial Council.</p> <p>Where agreed, members of the council may invite expert advisers and other government Ministers to participate in specific meetings or discussions, as appropriate.</p> <p>The Council will be supported by a Senior Officials level forum with representatives from all jurisdictions to support identification of priorities, development and review of papers and oversight of delivery of its priorities.</p>
Operations and decision making	<p>The Council will meet a minimum of three times per annum via a mixture of virtual and face-to-face formats. Where agreed by the co-Chairs and on advice from members, extraordinary meetings may be scheduled. The Council may also conduct work out-of-session as required.</p> <p>Meeting agendas and papers will be distributed at least five business days prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Council will make joint decisions and agree on common principles, however there will be flexibility in implementation across the jurisdictions to account for each jurisdiction's unique circumstances.</p> <p>Where possible, decisions should be consensus based. Where consensus or resolution cannot be reached on an agenda item within the established timeframe, consideration should be given to progressing an item through agreement between the Commonwealth and smaller groups of States and Territories.</p> <p>The operations and decision making of the Council will adhere to National Cabinet's Guidance for Intergovernmental Meetings.</p> <p>The Council will consult and collaborate as appropriate with other Ministerial Councils, including the Data and Digital Ministerial Council, Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council, and the Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR). This will enable collaborative work and ensure alignment of priorities, noting that gender inequality and women's safety issues intersect across multiple portfolios.</p> <p>The Ministerial Council will also coordinate with the Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG) in relation to work on women's safety. Under the <i>Work Plan to Strengthen Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault 2022-27</i>, all state and territory governments have committed to take collective and individual action to improve the experiences of</p>

	victim-survivors of sexual assault in the criminal justice system. The Commonwealth, state and territory governments are working together to develop the National Principles to Address Coercive Control.
Scope of Ministerial Council responsibility	<p>National Cabinet has tasked the Council with a productivity priority to increase gender balance across the labour market, through the identification of appropriate targets to promote gender balance across the most highly gender segregated industries, and consideration of how procurement can support gender equality outcomes. The Council will bring forward recommendations to National Cabinet on this priority.</p> <p>The Council will also support implementation of the National Cabinet's commitment to provide public sector workforce data on six Gender Equality Indicators to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).</p> <p>In addition, the Council's work will encompass, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32</i> (National Plan) through the development and delivery of the first five-year Action Plan under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32 (National Plan), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, and the National Plan Outcomes Framework • supporting the work of the CFFR on women's economic outcomes • monitoring and responding to issues relating to women's economic security and workforce participation, including the impacts of COVID-19 • collectively respond to emerging issues and evidence relating to women's safety. <p>The Council will consider the interactions and alignment between jurisdictions' gender equality strategies and frameworks, including to inform the Commonwealth's development/implementation of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality. The Council will also consider interactions and alignment with jurisdictions' domestic, family and sexual violence strategies to inform future work to progress the <i>National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-32</i>, including its Action Plans and dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plans.</p>
Review and reporting	<p>The Council will annually review the agreed priorities outlined in this work plan to ensure the Council continues to meet its objectives. This will ensure that identified new and emerging priorities, informed by discussions at meetings, are reflected in the forward work plan.</p> <p>The Council will report annually to National Cabinet on their priorities and annual work plans and on other key national priorities affecting women and women's safety, as required.</p> <p>To ensure the intergovernmental system remains focused on key priorities, the First Secretaries Group and National Cabinet will review the Council structure every two years.</p> <p>To facilitate review, the co-chairs of the Council will submit a summary of achievements of the previous year and the top priorities (maximum of five) for the upcoming year to the First Secretaries Group.</p> <p>Members of the Council may request a review of the operations of the Council and/or the forward work plan at any time through a written request to the Secretariat. Any review of operations must be agreed to by the Council.</p>

Attachment B - Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council Membership

Jurisdiction	Member	Ministerial Portfolios
Federal	Katy Gallagher	Minister for Women
	Amanda Rishworth	Minister for Social Services
	Justine Elliot	Assistant Minister for Social Services Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
ACT	Yvette Berry	Minister for Women Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
NSW	Jodie Harrison	Minister for Women Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
NT	Lauren Moss	Minister for Equality and Inclusion
	Kate Worden	Minister for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services Minister for Sport Minister for Territory Families
QLD	Shannon Fentiman	Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services Minister for Women
	Yvette D'Ath	Attorney General Minister for Justice Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
SA	Katrine Hildyard	Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
TAS	Madeleine Ogilvie	Minister for Women Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
VIC	Natalie Hutchins	Minister for Women
	Ros Spence	Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
WA	Sue Ellery	Minister for Women's Interests
	Sabine Winton	Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

Attachment C - Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council Relationships

<i>Body</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Overlapping work</i>	<i>Lead Department</i>
Data and Digital Ministers Meeting (DDMM)	<p>The purpose of this forum is to achieve cross-government collaboration on data and digital transformation to ensure smarter service delivery and improved outcomes.</p> <p>The Data and Digital Ministers Meeting is chaired by Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, as Minister for Finance, representing the Commonwealth and includes ministerial representation from all Australian states and territories, and New Zealand.</p>	WWSMC and DDMM are progressing a shared data project on family and domestic violence service delivery data.	Department of Finance
Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG)	<p>The Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG) comprises Attorneys-General from the Australian Government, all states and territories, and the New Zealand Minister for Justice. Its purpose is to implement a national and trans-Tasman focus on maintaining and promoting best practice in law reform.</p>	<p>The Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG) comprises Attorneys-General from the Australian Government, all states and territories, and the New Zealand Minister for Justice. The purpose of SCAG is to implement a national and trans-Tasman focus on maintaining and promoting best practice in law reform. SCAG convenes quarterly.</p>	Attorney-General's Department
The Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR)	<p>Comprising of the Commonwealth Treasurer and all state and territory treasurers, the CFFR is responsible for overseeing the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. A key element of CFFR's work as the gatekeeper of the Federation Funding Agreements (FFA) Framework is progressing schedules to the FFA, and providing central oversight of the system. CFFR reports to the</p>	WWSMC and CFFR hold shared priorities to deliver on the productivity priority to increase gender balance across the labour market.	The Treasury

	National Cabinet under the Australian Federal Relations Architecture. CFFR meets on a similar basis to the National Cabinet, or as required, and operates under National Cabinet operating principles.		
Women's Economic Outcomes Senior Officials Working Group (WEO-SOWG)	A workgroup under CFFR driving cross-jurisdictional collaboration to improve women's economic outcomes through the following priority focus areas: Gender-responsive budgeting, women's workforce participation and gender wage gaps and gender-responsive procurement.	WEO-SOWG is working on 3 priorities relevant to WWSMC and the productivity priority: gender responsive budgeting, gender responsive procurement, women's workforce participation and gender wage gaps. WWSMC was also tasked by National Cabinet with a productivity priority to improve women's workforce participation. Acting Assistant Secretary Shelby Schofield represents the Commonwealth OFW on the WEO-SOWG.	The Treasury
National Plan Advisory Group (NPAG)	The Department of Social Services is responsible for NPAG, an Advisory Group that sits within the governance structure that assists in delivering the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children.	WWSMC's priority on the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children.	Department of Social Services

Employment White Paper

Subject/Issue

On 25 September 2023, the Government released the Employment White Paper, *Working Future*, and a related package of nine new policies.

Handling Advice

- Refer any further questions on the Employment White Paper to Treasury.

OFW Role

- OFW seconded a Senior Adviser on a part-time basis to the White Paper Taskforce in Treasury.
- OFW facilitated engagement between Treasury and the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (the Taskforce).
 - Treasury updated the Taskforce on the Employment White Paper and Women's Budget Statement on 21 September 2022, 2 November 2022 and 23 January 2023. Treasury also provided a standalone briefing on 11 October 2022.
- OFW provided a formal Submission to the Employment White Paper outlining relevant research and examples of leading policies in relation to:
 - supporting all people, regardless of gender, to balance paid work and unpaid care, including through care infrastructure;
 - valuing women's paid and unpaid work;
 - supporting women locked out of the labour force;
 - addressing industrial and occupational gender segregation, including through the skills, education and training system;
 - maximising opportunities from energy transition and digitisation; and
 - creating safe and inclusive workplaces, including improving flexibility, addressing women's health needs at work and tackling workplace gender-based violence.
- ***If pressed:*** OFW's submission is available on notice (note: it has not been published publicly).
- OFW has provided input and advice on draft chapter outlines of the Employment White Paper.

- OFW applied a gender lens to the Employment White Paper, which contributes to the Government's priority of gender equality.

Key Points

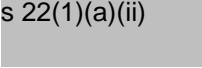
- One of the most fundamental changes in the Australian labour market over the past 50 years has been the rise in female workplace participation.
- Women are participating in the labour market at the highest rates ever, reflecting changing social attitudes, increased educational attainment and growth of the formal care economy.
 - About 62.7 per cent of women participated in the labour market in September 2023, compared with 37 per cent in 1966.
- Women are still overwhelmingly responsible for caring for children, ageing parents, and people with a disability.
 - Compared to the OECD, Australia has one of the highest rates of women working part-time, and lowest rates of employment for single mothers.
- The gender pay gap remains an ongoing challenge, and is present across all industries. The national gender pay gap between women and men in full-time work is 13.0 per cent.
 - Closing the gender pay gap is essential to achieving economic equality between women and men, as is ensuring women have equal choice and access in relation to education and training, labour force participation, career progression and financial independence.
- The Employment White Paper leverages and builds on significant work already under way to improve women's economic equality.
 - Improving women's workforce participation is critical for Australia's future economic prosperity and resilience. The Employment White Paper lays out the opportunities for women, and for the whole country, in closing gender gaps.
 - The paper outlines the demand for care and support services is expected to grow by 22 per cent by 2033, and there is a need for workforce planning. This sector is predominantly comprised of women. The Government has already given a pay rise and the largest ever increase in minimum and award wages to aged care workers.

- Subsequent investments following the White Paper through the Australian Skills Guarantee aim to boost women's participation in apprenticeships, another sector where workers are predominantly women.
- Additional reforms to support women's equality will come in 2024 with the Workplace Gender Equality Act to reduce the gender pay gap further.
- The National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality, to be released in early 2024, will build on the analysis and policy directions of the Employment White Paper to bring together Government and community action to improve economic outcomes for women.

Background

- The Employment White Paper, *Working Future*, was released publicly on 25 September 2023.
- The Employment White Paper sets out the Government's ongoing vision for Australia's labour market which is underpinned by five objectives, and a roadmap for achieving this vision.
 - These objectives aim to drive a more dynamic economy – boosting women's economic participation and closing gender gaps, creating greater economic resilience, higher productivity and sustained wages growth, and improved living standards for all.
- The key measures announced were:
 - \$9.1 million to progress scoping work on a National Skills Passport
 - \$31 million to turbocharge new TAFE Centres of Excellence
 - \$10 million to develop higher and degree apprenticeships
 - \$42.4 million to permanently extend the Work Bonus measure for older pensions and eligible veterans
 - \$42.8 million to double the employment income nil rate period for many income support recipients
 - Address labour market data gaps to support policy development and program
 - Back social enterprises to address persistent labour market disadvantage
 - Reform the Local Jobs Program

- Scope a new First Nations Economic Partnership with the Coalition of Peaks

Date: 20 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section: Workforce Participation
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: 
Consultation:

GENDER PAY GAP

Subject/Issue

Closing Australia's gender pay gap, currently 13 per cent, will provide significant benefits to the economy and support women's economic security.

Key points

- The national gender pay gap based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) full time average weekly ordinary earnings data is 13.0 per cent. This does not include over-time or bonuses.¹
- The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) also calculate a gender pay gap based on average total remuneration full time equivalent earnings for all men and women employed in organisations with 100 or more employees. The pay of part-time and casual employees is converted into standardised full-time equivalent earnings. Full time earnings includes superannuation, bonuses and other additional payments.
 - For 2021 – 2022, WGEA gender pay gap is 22.8 per cent.
 - Among non-public sector organisations reporting to WGEA, women, on average, earn 77.2 cents for every dollar earned by a man.²
- The difference in overall average remuneration between genders in the Australian Public Service (APS) is 5.2 per cent, decreasing from 6 per cent in 2021 and 7.8 per cent in 2018.³
- As at 2022, the gender pay gap cost the Australian economy \$51.8 billion a year in lost income.⁴
- Closing the gap in workforce participation rates would increase GDP by \$353 billion by 2050.⁵
- NSW Treasury found that eliminating gaps in participation, full-time work, and pay would increase the size of the NSW economy by 15 per cent, and add \$33,000 to average household income.⁶

Background

Why are these calculations different?

- Differences in coverage and scope between the ABS and WGEA's employer survey lead to differences in gender pay gap figures.
 - WGEA's survey covers around 40 per cent of the workforce and is calculated using total remuneration and includes part-time and casual workers.
 - The ABS survey collects information on average ordinary time earnings and is drawn from a representative sample, which tends to paint a more accurate picture of employment in Australia.
- Importantly, the coverage of WGEA's data will expand from the next 2022-23 reporting period (submissions will be required by 31 August) as Commonwealth public sector reporting will become mandatory.
- OFW draws on both the ABS and WGEA gender pay gaps to inform our work in advancing gender equality in Australia.

What causes the gender pay gap?

- The gender pay gap is the result of social and economic factors that combine to reduce women's earning capacity over their lifetime, including:
 - conscious and unconscious discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions;
 - women and men working in different industries and different jobs, with female-dominated industries and jobs attracting lower wages;
 - lack of workplace flexibility to accommodate caring and other responsibilities, especially in senior roles;
 - high rates of part-time work for women;
 - women's greater time out of the workforce for caring responsibilities impacting career progression and opportunities; and
 - women's disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work.

Previous Estimates hearings

- In previous Estimates hearings, OFW has been asked about the availability of disaggregated gender pay gap data, for example by First Nations status. The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) has received questions about the APS gender pay gap reporting.

Date: 3/10/2023
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: Social Policy and International Engagement / Evidence
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil

¹ ABS (2023). [*Gender Indicators, Gender pay gap measures, Mean weekly ordinary time earnings of full-time adult employees, May 2023.*](#)

² WGEA (2023). [*Gender pay gap data.*](#)

³ APSC (2023). [*Australian Public Service Remuneration Report 2023.*](#)

⁴ KPMG, Diversity Council Australia, WGEA (2022). [*She's Price\(d\)less – The economics of the gender pay gap.*](#)

⁵ Equity Economics (2021). [*Back of the pack: How Australia's parenting policies are failing women & our economy.*](#)

⁶ NSW Treasury (2022). [*TRP22-19: Women's economic opportunities in the NSW labour market and the impact of early childhood education and care.*](#)

Grants and Alliances

Subject/Issue

Women's Leadership and Development Program

The Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) funds a range of national and community level projects that contribute to improving the overall economic security, workforce participation, leadership representation and safety outcomes of women in Australia.

Key points

- More than 76,000 women and girls across Australia are estimated to benefit from projects delivered under the WLDP (2019-20 to 2026-27).
- The WLDP complements mainstream Government initiatives through targeted projects that aim to improve gender equality in Australia, including through community-led action to address harmful gender norms.
- 89 WLDP projects have been funded since 2019-20 including:
 - six National Women's Alliances (NWA)
 - six large scale projects, including the Women Leaders in Sport Program, Future Female Entrepreneurs Program and Family Friendly Workplaces Initiative
 - six projects through the Lead and Succeed grant round
 - one project through the Women in Public Office grant round
 - 70 national and community projects as a result of the 2020-21 Project Grants open competitive round.
- As at 15 October 2023, 78 grants are active under the WLDP.

National Women's Alliances

- The six NWA play a key role in understanding the experiences and issues affecting women in Australia, and ensuring their voices are central in the policy development process.
- Key functions of NWAs include: engaging with women and women's organisations; providing input to government inquiries, consultations and policy papers; collaborating with other NWAs on policy issues; and participating in events, conferences and advisory groups.

- Funding agreements with the NWA are in place until 30 November 2024.
 - This is an extension of five months beyond the original grant end date of 30 June 2024. This extension of time will ensure service continuity of women's advocacy during the finalisation and implementation of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.
 - Arrangements beyond this will be decided by Government.

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Alliance approaches to gender diversity

- Currently, Alliance grant agreements do not specifically define the terms 'women' or 'gender'. However, the need for representativeness has been recognised in evaluation of the Alliance model and gaps in representation are well recognised by the Alliances.
- People of all genders and sexualities should be able to participate in society and contribute fully, free from discrimination and violence. This includes women assigned female at birth, and those that may identify or be recognised within a community as a sex other than the one assigned at birth, or as non-binary.
- Through their work, Alliances engage with a range of organisations and women including from LGBTQI communities.
- The Equality Rights Alliance (ERA), for example, works collaboratively with organisations such as Equality Australia, the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service of NSW, and the Gender Centre to advocate for gender equality, which includes bringing forward issues affecting LGBTQI women.

- *For questions on gender definition refer to the Gender Definition LTB.*

Current WLDP Appropriation

- The annual ongoing base funding for the WLDP is approximately \$3.5 million (excl. indexation) and continues over the out years, as reflected in the Department of the Prime Minister's Portfolio Budget Statement (p.29).
- The WLDP received additional funding through terminating measures in the 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 Budgets. The non-ongoing nature of these measures results in an incremental reduction in funding over the out-years.
- The Government is considering future funding arrangements in the context of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.

Background

WLDP reduction in funding over the out years

2023-24 PBS (\$'m)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
WLDP Appropriation	21.368	21.124	17.965	5.246	65.703

- While the majority of WLDP projects will terminate by 30 June 2024, some high impact, national coverage projects have been funded for longer periods as follows:
 - The Council of Small Business Organisations Australia is funded \$8.7 million (2022-23 to 2025-26) to expand its successful Future Female Entrepreneurs Program to 30 June 2026, with 18,850 women and girls predicted to benefit.
 - At the completion of a successful pilot program funded under the WLDP in 2020-21, Future Women received an additional \$8.7 million in 2022-23 to expand the Jobs Academy to 30 June 2026, increasing its reach by an additional 2,000 women.
 - UNICEF will receive \$1.4 million (2022-23 to 2024-25) to expand the Family Friendly Workplace Initiative, originally funded through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Women in 500 workplaces will benefit from this program.
 - Women for Election (Australia) were successful in securing \$5 million in funding (2022-23 to 2026-27) for the Women in Public Office program. An estimated 4,300 women will benefit.

Women in Public Office (WIPO) Grant

- Delivering on the Government's election commitment to improve gender equality and diversity in politics, \$5 million (2022-23 to 2026-27) will be provided to Women for Election Australia to equip and encourage more women across the political spectrum to run for public office at local, state and federal levels.
 - The project will build and support a pipeline of diverse women to prepare for, and enter, public office via:
 - **place-based training events** across Australia, following the election cycle of local, state and federal tiers of government
 - **online training forums and mentoring**
 - A **tech-based training platform**, *Campaign in Your Pocket* app, containing candidate resources and support forums.
 - The project commenced in June 2023.
 - They will lead a group of partners to deliver this non-partisan program, including Politics in Colour, Australian Local Government Women's Association, Global Institute of Women's Leadership, Ruth McGowan Pty Ltd, and Quantum Impact Group Pty Ltd.

- Women for Election Australia were selected through a competitive selection process.

WLDP Project Grants

- WLDP projects are designed to work with diverse groups of women, including women with disability, First Nations women, culturally and linguistically diverse women and rural regional and remote women. Refer to [Attachment A](#) for a summary of all WLDP projects across selected industries.
- All WLDP funded organisations are required to submit an annual Activity Work Plan (AWP) and budget, annual financial reports, biannual progress reports and a final report. A number of organisations will also complete evaluations of their projects.
- Progress reports were due 31 July 2023. The majority of projects are showing good progress on delivery of their grant activities. Some projects are still recovering from pandemic and flood impacts, and OFW are monitoring these projects closely to ensure they are able to deliver. The annual updates to AWP's were undertaken 1 June 2023.
- To date, evaluation of the WLDP has been limited to individual project streams and independent project evaluations. In line with best practice grant management, a program wide evaluation approach is being considered to measure WLDP outcomes and evaluate the effectiveness of the program in achieving the Government's gender equality priorities.

National Women's Alliances

- The six NWA are:
 - Equality Rights Alliance – women's economic security and women's leadership
 - National Women's Safety Alliance – women's safety
 - Harmony Alliance – migrant, refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse women
 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance – First Nations women
 - National Rural Women's Coalition – women living in rural, regional and remote areas
 - Women With Disabilities Australia – women with disability.
- NWA assist Government by providing advice to inform policy and implement government priorities. Recent contributions include:
 - Informing the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality;
 - Supporting international human rights processes, including attending the Commission on the Status of Women 67 (CSW67) (Women with Disability Australia, Equality Rights Alliance, National Rural Women's Coalition), and reporting on Australia's progress under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and

- Relevant Alliances working with the Department of Social Services on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children and the Attorney-General's Department regarding Respect@Work implementation (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance), as well as lodging submissions to the Disability Royal Commission on Sexual and Reproductive Rights and the Family Law Amendment Bill (WWDA).
- *For questions on the evaluation of the NWA model refer to the NWA Evaluation LTB.*

Key facts and figures

WLDP Funding

WLDP Funding Allocations (\$m)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
WLDP Appropriation	21.368	21.124	17.965	5.246	65.703
Expended & Committed	20.050	11.993	7.744	0.400	40.187
Forecasted & Proposed	0.419	0.312	0.400	0.443	1.574
Remaining Unallocated Balance	0.899	8.819	9.821	4.403	23.942

- \$65.703 million total budget over 2023-24 to 2026-27.
- \$41.760 million (63.6% of budget) is contractually committed to current projects or allocated for future planned activities over 2023-24 to 2026-27.

NWA Funding

Financial Year per Alliance	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Base Funding	\$246,899 ¹	\$287,000	\$292,740 ²	\$127,464 ³	\$954,103
One-off Funding	-	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Total	\$246,899	\$312,740	\$305,913	\$127,464	\$993,016

¹ \$246,899 pro rata from 21 Aug 2021 to 30 June 2022 to commence new agreement following the open competitive round

- Each of the six Alliances receive \$865,552 over 2021-22 to 2023-2024.
 - In 2022-23, additional funding of \$25,740 was provided per Alliance
s47E(d) [REDACTED]
 - s 47E(d) [REDACTED]
- In 2024-25, \$127,463 will be provided for a five month extension to the current agreements from 30 June 2024 to 30 November 2024. Indexation will be applied in line with WCI once the rate is formalised in the May 2024-25 Budget.

Attachments

- **Attachment A:** WLDP projects across selected industries

Date:	26 September 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Doss McPherson
Branch/Section:	Gender Equality Strategy and Reform / Grants Policy and Implementation
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]
Telephone No:	[REDACTED]
Consultation:	Nil

WLDP Projects – support across selected industries

Note: Some projects are duplicated across categories where they have multiple target industries.

Projects highlighted in grey are completed.

Industry	WLDP projects
Admin Support Services	Nil
Construction	<p>Five projects totalling \$7.7 million over 2018-19 to 2025-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BUSY Group (\$838,145) – support women across QLD and WA to commence an apprenticeship or traineeship in traditionally male-dominated industries including automotive, information technology, construction, meatworks and mining. • Habitat for Humanity Australia (\$788,458) – employ and train disadvantaged young women in building and construction skills. • Master Builders Australia (\$2,293,000) – deliver the Women Building Australia project. • RTV Consultancy (\$800,000) – training and advice for women in Tasmania interested in the agriculture, horticulture, civil construction, rail, transport, mining and quarrying industries. • Women’s Health Grampians (\$680,000) – support recruitment and retention of women in construction and manufacturing in the Grampians region of Victoria. • University of New South Wales (\$2,311,000) – engage female high school students, and women studying and working in construction to increase women’s workforce participation and leadership in the construction industry.
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Planning Association of Australia (\$1,648,800) – deliver the <i>Scholarships for Women in Finance and Economics</i> project. The project will deliver scholarships that encourage more women to study accounting, business, finance and economics, or to renew, upskill or refresh their skills in these areas.
Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental health (\$365,000) - will equip a cohort of women medical researchers with skills and confidence to articulate the value of themselves and their research, building their capacity to secure research funding and support their career progression.
Information Media and Telecommunications	<p>Two projects totalling \$0.3 million over 2020-21 to 2023-24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Solution Network Australia (\$263,200) - support regional women to gain the essential skills, knowledge and training qualifications required to work in the digital technology age. • Narwee Baptist Community Broadcasters (\$20,000) - provide a radio production training course for women, particularly women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the St George district.
Mining	Three projects totalling \$2.8 million over 2020-21 to 2023-24.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BUSY Group (\$838,145) – support women across QLD and WA to commence an apprenticeship or traineeship in traditionally male-dominated industries including automotive, information technology, construction, meatworks and mining. • RTV Consultancy (\$800,000) – training and advice for women in Tasmania interested in the agriculture, horticulture, civil construction, rail, transport, mining and quarrying industries. • The Skill Engineer (\$1,173,923) – target and encourage women aged 17–24 to enter into an apprenticeship in a non-traditional trade such as fitting and turning, sheet metal fabrication, boiler making, welding, casting and molding, diesel, mechanical or electrical fitting.
Real Estate Services	Nil.
STEM	<p>12 projects totalling \$19.4 million over 2020-21 to 2025-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia (\$13.7 million) – continues the successful Academy for Enterprising Girls aimed at young girls aged 10-18, and the Accelerator for Enterprising Women aimed at young women aged 18-24, with expanded offerings for all women aged 18 and over via a new Mature Enterprising Women stream. • Big Hart (\$200,000) – support young women (aged 13–20) in regional, rural and remote areas to build new pathways to STEM education and careers. • Inventorium (\$608,700) – support women who have been out of the workforce for at least six months by building skills and confidence to re-enter the workforce through exploring career ambitions and challenging the stereotypes of typically male-dominated fields and sectors, including STEM based careers. • Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (\$945,602) - tackle common barriers to career progression and sector retention faced by women employed in the STEM sector by providing women with the qualifications, skills, confidence and networks to attain senior leadership and Board positions. • Spacecubed Ventures (\$800,000) - provides women an alternative learning pathway into the tech sector by teaching content from beginner right through to junior developer • Strategy Matrix (\$647,000) - deliver foundation skills and grassroots capacity building for young regional women to jumpstart their career through boot camps mentoring and business networking opportunities • The Australian Power Institute (\$888,221) - support women to build engineering careers and leadership roles in the Australian power sector through a 12 month program • The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental health (\$365,000) - address the disparity in research funding applications and success rates for women • The Solution Network Australia (\$263,200) - support regional women to gain the essential skills, knowledge and training qualifications required to work in the digital technology age • Tumby Bay Progress Association (\$230,994) - supports women to develop skills for employment and workforce participation through a Learning Hub

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Sydney Women (\$400,000) - program is comprised of four courses which will promote STEM career participation, STEM career networking and leadership, financial and job confidence, and career growth mentoring • Whittlesea Community Connections (\$358,076) - supports the creation of employment pathways for women by delivering job focused courses and trade tasters across horticulture, agriculture, trades, IT and STEM
Transport, Postal and Warehouse	<p>Three projects totalling \$2.2 million over 2020-21 to 2023-24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Corporate (\$660,000) - support refugee and migrant women's skill development to access current job opportunities in the logistics and warehousing industry. • Flightdeck Crewing (\$772,400) – support women to access a career in the male-dominated aviation industry through awareness of opportunities, creating connections and developing plans to secure a job in aviation. • RTV Consultancy (\$800,000) – training and advice for women in Tasmania interested in the agriculture, horticulture, civil construction, rail, transport, mining and quarrying industries.

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Subject/Issue

In order to strengthen our economy, society and nation, the Government is putting gender equality at the centre of budget decision making with the implementation of gender responsive budgeting.

Handling of Questions about Gender Analysis

2023-24 MYEFO

Question about gender analysis and gender impact assessment throughout the 2023-24 MYEFO should focus on the process outlined in the Guide. Measures being brought forward throughout MYEFO are currently Cabinet-in-Confidence.

- OFW can answer questions on the operation of the gender responsive budgeting system.
- Throughout the MYEFO process, the focus is on building capability and capacity building across the APS to undertake gender analysis.
- Measures coming forward through the 2023-24 MYEFO are currently being considered by Expenditure Review Committee and Cabinet, and are Cabinet in Confidence.
 - [Further information on gender analysis and gender impact assessment on specific measures may be provided at future hearings, following the release of MYEFO.]

2023-24 Budget

Questions about gender analysis and gender impact assessment on specific measures from 2023-23 Budget should be referred to the responsible Minister or department, or refer to Hansard from the May 2023 hearings.

- The Office for Women provided information during the May 2023 hearings of this committee on gender impact assessment for the pilots at the October 2022-23 Budget and 2023-24 Budget.
- For Information on specific measures, refer 2023-24 Budget GIA Outcomes.

OFW Role

- The Office for Women is responsible for implementing gender responsive budgeting.
- To prepare agencies to undertake gender analysis and gender impact assessments, the Office for Women has developed guidance called *Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment* ('the Guide').
 - The Guide was published on the PM&C website on 11 August 2023 and shared widely with policy officers across the public service.
 - The new requirements for gender analysis and gender impact assessment commenced with the publication of the Guide.
 - The Office for Women provided advice to agencies on the new requirements (in particular, the criteria for gender impact assessment) as the Guide was being finalised. This advice was largely provided via email in response to inquiries.
 - *See APS Capability Brief for more information*
- The Office for Women is monitoring the quality and outcomes of gender analysis and gender impact assessments.
 - This will help to improve future guidance we provide to the APS and inform the development of training and processes to support gender responsive budgeting.

Key Points

- From the 2023-24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO), the Government is extending gender responsive budgeting across the budget.
 - This delivers on the government's election commitment and is central to putting gender equality and the impact on women at the centre of budget decision making.
 - The new arrangements for gender analysis and gender impact assessment, outlined in the APS Guide, commenced on the day of publication (on 11 August 2023).
 - The Department of Finance also issued advice to agencies (on 14 August 2023) on the new arrangements and the APS Guide.
- All agencies are required to conduct gender impact assessments on policy proposals that meet a set of criteria.
 - The criteria apply to all revenue, savings and expenditure proposals.

- The five criteria are:
 - The proposal has a significant positive or negative impact on **gender equality**, meaning the policy is specifically designed to improve gender equality, or could inadvertently worsen gender equality.
 - The proposal targets **cohorts** of people who can be typically be disadvantaged (this may be because of their gender, or other reason, or a combination).
 - The proposal relates to Australia's highly gender-segregated **workforce**. The benchmark for a gender-segregated industry being used is where one gender comprises 60 per cent or more of the workforce.
 - The proposal establishes a National Partnership **Agreement** (or like agreement) to capture longer-term policy or funding arrangements.
 - The proposal has a **value** at \$250 million or more over the forward estimates. The value of \$250 million was selected after a period of testing across previous budgets.
- The criteria for gender impact assessment have been designed to capture high-value, high-impact proposals that have the potential to advance gender equality in Australia.
- Departments also assess the level of detail of their gender analysis so that it is proportional to the value, scope and impact of the proposal.
- The gender analysis and gender impact assessment is included in the New Policy Proposal or attached in the Gender Impact Assessment Template.
- The Office for Women will review the expansion of gender responsive budgeting, including the operation of the criteria to assess how effectively they capture high-value, high-impact proposals, and so that refinements can be in place for the 2024-25 Budget.
- The 2023-24 MYEFO process is currently underway. Further information on how the system of gender responsive budgeting is operating can be provided at future hearings. The next Women's Budget Statement will also include information on gender budgeting.

Background

Definitions

- Gender responsive budgeting weaves consideration of gender impact through the budget process and is a key way that governments can identify and fund measures that close gender gaps.
- Gender analysis refers to processes policy makers can use to assess and highlight how a policy proposal might impact people in different ways based on gender.
- A preliminary gender analysis surfaces gendered impacts.
- A comprehensive gender analysis builds on the preliminary analysis to identify policy responses and actions to address any impact. A comprehensive gender analysis is usually undertaken to complete a gender impact assessment.
- For the 2023-24 MYEFO process, all New Policy Proposals (NPPs) that meet one or more of the five criteria below require a gender impact assessment:
 - Gender equality: The proposal has a significant positive or negative impact on gender equality
 - Cohorts: The proposal targets cohorts of people who can be typically disadvantaged
 - Workforce: The proposal relates to a gender segregated industry
 - Partnership: The proposal establishes a National Partnership Agreement (or like agreement)
 - Value: The total value of the proposal is \$250 million or more over the forward estimates.

GIA pilots at the October 2022-23 Budget and 2023-24 Budget

- The scale-up of gender responsive budgeting at MYEFO builds on two pilots of gender impact assessment.
- In the October 2022-23 Budget, agencies completed 14 gender impact assessments, and in the 2023-24 Budget agencies completed 12 gender impact assessments.
 - For the pilots, gender impact assessments were identified by the Office for Women and requested, via letter, by the Minister for Women. The gender impact assessments were primarily focussed in the priority areas of jobs and skills, housing and the care economy.
- Lessons from the pilots, and from local and international best practice, have informed the approach being taken to roll out gender responsive budgeting.

OECD review of gender responsive budgeting in Australia

- The Australian system of gender responsive budgeting has been informed by the OECD Gender Budgeting Framework.
 - The Framework identifies three core elements underpinning an effective approach to gender budgeting; a strong strategic framework, effective tools of implementation and a supportive enabling environment.
- In November 2022, the Office for Women engaged the OECD to do a review of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in Australia.
- The OECD review commenced with a five-day, fact-finding mission to Australia in November 2022.
 - Consultation meetings held throughout the mission will inform the OECD's report. Canada and Iceland acted as peer reviewers for the review.
- The OECD provided high-level, preliminary findings from their mission to inform the approach being taken from 2023-24 MYEFO.
- The OECD is currently finalising their report which will be released in late 2023. The OECD uses a maturity model for implementing gender budgeting and the report will include an implementation roadmap.
- The Office for Women received \$450,000 in the October 2022-23 Budget for the OECD to review gender budgeting in Australia.

Women's Budget Statement

- The Women's Budget Statement highlights the Government's action to fulfil its commitment to gender responsive budgeting.
 - The Department of the Treasury is responsible for the Women's Budget Statement. The Office for Women supports the Treasury in the preparation of the Women's Budget Statement.
- The October 2022 Women's Budget Statement included case studies from the first pilot of gender impact assessment.
- The May 2023 Women's Budget Statement outlined the Government's approach to expanding gender responsive budgeting.
- The next Women's Budget Statement will accompany the 2024-25 Budget.

Date: 23 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section: Gender Budgeting
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation:

Housing Affordability

Subject/Issue

Housing affordability is a gendered issue. Rates of homelessness are increasing for women. The leading cause of homelessness for women is family and domestic violence (FDV).

OFW Role

- OFW provides policy advice on the gendered dimensions of housing to support gender equality outcomes.
- Housing was a priority area for Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 Budgets, with a number of key items subject to GIA.

Key Points

- Against a backdrop of an ageing population, declining home ownership, and continued economic disadvantage experienced by women, the number of women experiencing and at risk of homelessness is expected to increase.
 - In 2021, women accounted for 44 per cent of the homeless population and accounted for 81.7 per cent of the increase in people experiencing homelessness between 2016 and 2021.
 - Older women were the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness between 2011 and 2016, increasing by 31 per cent.
 - In 2021, older women had a homelessness rate of 19 per 10,000 people, down from 20 in 2016.ⁱ
 - Women who sleep rough report poorer health outcomes and greater problematic drug and/or alcohol use relative to both men sleeping rough or women experiencing other types of homelessness.ⁱⁱ
- Women also experience homelessness differently to men, as they often find themselves at risk of homelessness with children. Women are likely to be underrepresented in official homelessness statistics.
- Housing costs have risen the most over the last three decades for people on low incomes, disproportionately impacting women who are more likely to spend more of their income on private rental accommodation.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Women are the largest proportion of social housing occupants (55-56 per cent)^{iv} and Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients (single women make up 49 per cent of recipients, while single men make up 30 per cent).^v

Background

- The Government has made a range of investments in housing.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

- The Government is investing \$2.7 billion to increase the maximum rates of CRA by 15 per cent for all recipients of CRA.
 - Single women make up 49 per cent of CRA recipients, the largest group in receipt of this support.

National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA)

- The NHHA provides around \$1.7 billion each year to states and territories to improve Australians' access to secure and affordable housing across the housing spectrum.
 - Women and children affected by FDV and older people (including women) are priority homelessness cohorts in the current NHHA.
- The Government is working with the states and territories and National Housing Supply and Affordability Council to develop the new NHHA agreement.
 - The next NHHA, due to replace the existing NHHA that expires on 30 June 2024, is an opportunity to address issues of effectiveness, accountability and transparency of the current agreement.

National Housing and Homelessness Plan

- The National Housing and Homelessness Plan will set out a 10 year shared vision and strategy to help people access safe and affordable housing.
 - Consultations on the Issues Paper commenced on 7 August 2023.

Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF)

- The \$10 billion HAFF, passed the Senate on 14 September 2023 will deliver 20,000 new social housing dwellings and 10,000 affordable housing dwellings, with a minimum of 4,000 to be allocated to women and children affected by FDV and older women on low incomes at risk of homelessness.

Social Housing Accelerator

- The Social Housing Accelerator is a \$2 billion payment to states, announced 17 June 2023, that will deliver thousands of new social homes across Australia.
- States will have flexibility in how they permanently boost social housing stock under the Social Housing Accelerator, including new builds, expanding programs, renovating or refurbishing existing but uninhabitable stock.

New Homes Bonus

- The New Homes Bonus, announced 16 August 2023, comprises \$3 billion of performance-based funding for states and territories who achieve more than their share of the one million well-located homes target under the National Housing Accord.

National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF)

- The Government is investing \$1 billion in the NHIF to support new social housing stock.

Help to Buy

- Help to Buy will support women into home ownership.
 - Women will benefit from a smaller deposit, smaller mortgage, and smaller mortgage repayments – and not needing to pay lenders mortgage insurance.

A Better Deal for Renters

- National Cabinet has agreed to A Better Deal for Renters, which will harmonise and strengthen renters' rights across Australia, including on eviction policy and rent increases, and to better support tenants experiencing FDV.
 - This includes state and territories agreeing to allow tenants experiencing FDV to end agreements without penalty and a streamlined process and change the locks, and make security improvements without the landlord's permission.
- Jurisdictions have also agreed to consider further actions to protect victim-survivors of FDV.

Productivity Commission (PC) review into the NHHA

- The PC released its review into the NHHA on 30 September 2022, finding that the NHHA is ineffective. The PC report noted that:
 - housing stress for women may be significantly underreported
 - declining rental affordability disproportionately impacts women in low-income households facing rental discrimination
 - A lack of affordable housing and crisis accommodation can result in people staying in unsafe and insecure accommodation.
- The Government has offered a one-year extension of the NHHA to 30 June 2024, to allow for the development of the new arrangement in consultation with the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council and states and territories.

Handling Advice

- Refer questions about Housing Australia, the HAFF, the Social Housing Accelerator, Housing Accord, NHIF, Help to Buy, New Homes Bonus and 'A Better Deal for Renters' to the Department of the Treasury.
- Refer questions about the NHHA and the Plan to the Department of Social Services.

Date: 9 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section: Workforce Participation
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Economic Division

ⁱ ABS (2023) [Estimating Homelessness: Census](#) ABS, accessed 17/04/2023.

ⁱⁱ Box E, Flatau P, and Lester L (2022) *Women sleeping rough: The health, social and economic costs of homelessness*. Health and Social Care in the Community.

ⁱⁱⁱ Dawson E (2022) *A Home of One's Own: Philanthropic & Social Sector Solutions for Women's Housing*. Per Capita, p. 22.

^{iv} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (29 June 2022) [Housing Assistance in Australia](#)

^v Treasury (2023) [Women's Budget Statement](#), at p. 17.

Contributing to International Efforts on Gender Equality

Subject/Issue

The Government recognises that gender equality is a public good and is a committed global leader on gender equality.

Key points

- Office for Women (OFW) brings Australia's voice to the global stage in support of gender equality, by:
 - Chairing the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) for 2023-24;
 - demonstrating our credentials as a committed and longstanding partner on gender equality in the Pacific (Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting; supporting Pacific engagement across multilateral fora);
 - Supporting engagement with the G20, through the G20 EMPOWER Alliance and the G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment;
 - Participating in the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); and
 - Reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- OFW measures its impact on gender equality internationally through:
 - negotiating commitments that deliver outcomes for women and safeguarding international standards on gender equality (e.g. at CSW67 negotiating language on technology-facilitated-gender based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights);
 - sharing national good practice in international fora that lifts ambition in other countries (for example, generating discussions on gender responsive budgeting at APEC); and
 - applying international learnings to the Australian context (for example, in late 2022 the OECD provided technical advice to Australia to improve gender responsive budgeting).
- OFW works closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which leads Australia's gender commitments in our foreign policy.

- OFW engages with colleagues across other Government departments on efforts to achieve gender equality internationally.

Background

- Australia is a global leader on gender equality and strives to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment are at the centre of all policy decisions at home, in our region and around the globe.
- In 2023, the Minister for Women and OFW participated in regional and multilateral forums to advance Australia's gender equality priorities.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

- Australia is the 2023-2024 Chair of the APEC Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE), and is represented by Chantelle Stratford from OFW.
- The first PPWE meeting was held on 22-24 February 2023 in Palm Springs, USA.
 - The head of OFW chaired and Sam Mostyn, Chair of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, attended as part of Australia's official delegation, bringing her experience on women's economic empowerment to the room.
- The Women and the Economy Forum (WEF) and second PPWE meeting were held on 17-20 August 2023 in Seattle, US.
 - the Minister for Women was represented by the head of OFW at WEF
- Australia successfully used the PPWE platform to advance Australia's gender policy priorities of gender responsive budgeting, and valuing the care economy.
 - And increasing the focus on mainstreaming gender across APEC's working groups, e.g. joint dialogue with the PPWE and the Committee on Trade and Investment.

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

- OFW leads Australia's participation at CSW, working closely across Government.
- The sixty-seventh session of CSW (CSW67) was held on 6-17 March 2023 in New York City, USA.
- The delegation included:
 - Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians and Indigenous Health, representing the Minister for Women
 - Australia's Permanent Representative to the UN
 - Ambassador for Gender Equality
 - Sex Discrimination Commissioner
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner

- e-Safety Commissioner
- Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency
- Head of OFW
- Two civil society representatives.

G20 EMPOWER and the Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment

- The 2023 G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment (MCWE) was held on 2-4 August 2023 in Gujarat, India.
 - The Ambassador for Gender Equality represented the Minister for Women.
- Ahead of the MCWE meeting, the G20 EMPOWER meeting was held on 1-2 August 2023 also in Gujarat, India.
 - Assistant Secretary OFW, Rochelle White, and CEO of Engineers Australia, Romilly Madew, attended as Australia's public and private sector representatives.

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Women Leaders Meeting

- The PIF Women Leaders Meeting was held in Fiji on 31 August – 1 September.
- The Minister for Women attended.

Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting

- The 13th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting was held in The Bahamas on 22-23 August 2023.
- Australia's High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago represented Australia.

Women Deliver

- The 2023 Women Deliver conference was held in Rwanda in July 2023.
- The Ambassador for Gender Equality represented Australia.

CEDAW Ninth Periodic Report

- OFW leads the reporting on Australia's implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Convention).
- Australia received its List of Issues Prior to Reporting in late March 2023. Australia will submit its ninth periodic report as required in 2024.
- The Australian Government has commissioned an independent 'shadow report' on the Government's implementation of the Convention through the National Women's Alliances.

- The shadow report is an investment in transparent democracy and accountability on gender equality and the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women.

Key facts and figures

- In 2023, Australia ranked 26th overall on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (out of 146 countries). Australia ranks 38th for Economic Participation and Opportunity, 78th for Education Attainment, 89th for Health and Survival, and 29th for Political Empowerment.

Handling Advice

- Refer questions on Women, Peace and Security to DFAT

Date:	3 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Social Policy and International Engagement
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

Key Facts

Subject/Issue

Key facts on women's employment, income and poverty, housing, safety, leadership, and international rankings.

Key points

Employment

- Women's workforce participation rate is 62.7 per cent, compared to 71.0 per cent for men.¹
- Women's unemployment rate is 3.7 per cent, compared to 3.4 per cent for men.
- Women make up 39.1 per cent of all full-time workers and 67.0 per cent of part-time workers. This trend has remained relatively unchanged over the last decade.

Gender pay gap

- The national gender pay gap is currently 13.0 per cent based on ABS full-time average weekly ordinary earnings data.²
 - On average, women working full-time can expect to earn \$1,686.00 per week, compared to \$1,938.30 per week for men. This is a gap of \$252.30 per week.
- In 2020-21 women's median taxable income was \$44,547, 25.0 per cent lower than men's.³
- For people approaching retirement (ages 60-64) women's superannuation balances were 25.1 per cent lower than men's in the 2020-21 financial year.⁴

Support Payments – as at 31 March 2023

- Of the 231,000 Parenting Payment (single) recipients, 95.5 per cent are women.⁵
 - There are 57,000 Single Principal Carers with a child aged 8 – 13, 91.1 per cent are women.
- Of the 64,170 people currently receiving Parenting Payment (partnered), 90.2 per cent are female.

- There are 53,000 JobSeeker recipients aged 55-59 and on Job Seeker for 9 or more continuous months – 55.5 per cent are women.
- Of all Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients, 49 per cent are single women.

Homelessness

- Of those experiencing homelessness in 2021, 44.1 per cent were women (an increase of 10.1 per cent from 2016), and 55.9 per cent were men (an increase of 1.6 per cent from 2016).⁶
- Women accounted for 81.7 per cent of the 6,067 increase of people experiencing homelessness in 2021.
- Women aged 35-44 years were the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness between 2016 and 2021, increasing by 20 per cent.⁷
 - Between 2011 and 2016, women over the age of 55 were the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness, increasing by 31 per cent.⁸
- The rate of homelessness for men decreased in 2021 to 55 men per 10,000 (from 58 in 2016), while the rate for women increased in 2021 to 42 women per 10,000 (from 41 in 2016).
- Family and domestic violence is the greatest cause of homelessness for women.⁹
- Women who sleep rough report poorer health outcomes and greater problematic drug and/or alcohol use relative to both men sleeping rough and women experiencing other types of homelessness.¹⁰
- 55 per cent of social housing tenants are women.¹¹

Housing

- Housing costs have risen the most over the last three decades for people on low incomes, disproportionately impacting women who are more likely to spend more of their income on private rental housing.¹²
- Women are the largest proportion of public housing and community housing occupants¹³ and Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients.¹⁴
- 62.3 per cent of social housing tenants are women (36.5 per cent are men).¹⁵

Women's safety

- More than 1 in 2 women (53 per cent) and 1 in 4 men (25 per cent) have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime.¹⁶
 - In 2021-22, 1.3 million women (13 per cent) and 427,000 men (4.5 per cent) experienced sexual harassment.¹⁷
- 1 in 4 women (23 per cent or 2.3 million) and 1 in 14 men (7.3 per cent or 693,000) have experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime.¹⁸
- In women's most recent sexual assault by a male, the perpetrator was most often an intimate partner (53 per cent) and the incident most often occurred in a home (69 per cent).¹⁹
- In the 12 months after an assault, two-thirds of women experienced anxiety or fear for their personal safety, and one in nine had to take time off work.²⁰
- 2 in 5 women (39 per cent) and 2 in 5 men (42 per cent) have experienced violence since the age of 15.²¹
 - 1 in 5 women (22 per cent) and 1 in 16 men (6.1 per cent) experienced sexual violence.
 - 1 in 3 women (31 per cent) and 2 in 5 men (42 per cent) experienced physical violence.
 - Men are more likely to experience physical assault by a stranger (57 per cent) in a location outside the home, like a pub, bar or in the street (74 per cent).²²
 - Women are more likely to experience physical assault by an intimate partner (63 per cent) while at home (70 per cent).²³
- On average, 1 women is killed by a partner every 14 days.²⁴
- 59.7 per cent of single mothers have experienced intimate partner violence.²⁵
- 25 per cent of women who wanted to leave a violent partner were unable to due to a lack of financial support²⁶ and 15 per cent of women who returned to a violent partner did so because they had no money or nowhere else to go.²⁷
- Indigenous women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised for family violence than non-Indigenous women.²⁸

Leadership

- The percentage of women on ASX200 boards is 36.4 per cent.²⁹
 - The percentage of women in ASX300 boards is 35.6 per cent.
- Chief Executive Women's 2023 Senior Executive Census reported that:³⁰
 - 20 women were CEOs in the ASX200, up from 14 women in 2022.
 - 26 women were CEOs in the ASX300 (9 per cent), up from 18 women (6 per cent) in 2022.
 - 23 per cent of ASX300 companies have gender balanced executive leadership teams, an increase from 17 per cent in 2022.
- The percentage of women on Australian Government boards is 51.4 per cent; 41 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions are held by women.³¹
 - Seven of 13 Government portfolios did not meet the 50 per cent target for women's representation on boards.
- There are 10 women in the Cabinet (43.5 per cent), the largest number of women ever in an Australian Cabinet.³²
- There are 55 women in the Government (104 people).
- The proportion of women in the House of Representatives is 39.1 per cent.
- The proportion of women in the Senate is 57.9 per cent.

International rankings, key engagement and leadership

- Australia ranks 26th (out of 146) in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2023; we rank 38th for economic participation and opportunity.³³
- The 2014 G20 commitment to reduce the gender participation gap for 15-64 years by 25 per cent by 2025 was met by Australia in March 2020, with a participation gap of 9.1 percentage points.
 - There were subsequent monthly fluctuations and the gap widened due to the impact of COVID-19 and Australia surpassed the target in February 2021.
 - The current gap is 7.4 percentage points (12-month average).

Date: 19/10/2023
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: Workforce Participation
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil

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- ¹ ABS, [Labour Force, Australia, September 2023](#). Released October 2023
- ² ABS, [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, May 2023](#). Released August 2023
- ³ ATO, [Taxation statistics 2020-21, Table 4, Chart 3](#). Released August 2023
- ⁴ ATO, [Taxation statistics 2020-21, Table 5, Chart 12](#). Released August 2023
- ⁵ DSS, [Expanded DSS Benefit and Payment Recipient Demographics – March 2023](#). Released September 2023
- ⁶ ABS (2023) [Estimating Homelessness: Census](#). Accessed 20/09/2023
- ⁷ OFW calculations using ABS (2023) [Estimating Homelessness: Census](#). Accessed 20/09/2023
- ⁸ ABS (2016). [Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness](#). Accessed 20/09/2023
- ⁹ Equity Economics (2021) [Nowhere to Go](#) p. 5
- ¹⁰ Box E, Flatau P, and Lester L (2022) *Women sleeping rough: The health, social and economic costs of homelessness*. Health and Social Care in the Community.
- ¹¹ AIHW, [Housing assistance in Australia, 2021-22](#). Released 14 July 2023
- ¹² Dawson E (2022) *A Home of One's Own: Philanthropic & Social Sector Solutions for Women's Housing*. Per Capita, p. 22.
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- ²² ABS, [Physical violence, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023
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- ²⁴ Calculated using Bricknell S 2023. *Homicide in Australia 2020-21*. Statistical Report no. 42. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.52922/sr78979>
- ²⁵ Summers, *The choice: Violence or poverty*, 2022. Based on data from the Personal Safety Survey
- ²⁶ ABS, *Partner Violence – In Focus: Crime and Justice Statistics*. Released 28 January 2020
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- ²⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story*, cat no. FDV 3 (2019) 213
- ²⁹ AICD, [Gender Diversity Progress Report, March 2023 to June 2023](#). Released August 2023
- ³⁰ Chief Executive Women, [CEW Senior Executive Census 2023](#). Released 6 September 2023
- ³¹ PMC, [Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2021-2022](#). Released November 2022
- ³² APH, [Address labels and CSV files – Parliament of Australia](#)
- ³³ WEF, [Global Gender Gap Report 2023](#). Released June 2023

National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

Key Points

- The Office for Women (OFW) is continuing to develop the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (Strategy). We expect to deliver the Strategy in 2024.
 - We want to ensure that we have the time to develop the Strategy properly rather than quickly. This is a sentiment that has come through strongly from stakeholders through our consultation process.
 - The delivery date has been extended from the second half of 2023 so we can do this, including by properly considering critical inputs, such as the final report of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET), extensive feedback from consultations, and inputs to related processes such as the Employment White Paper.
- The Strategy will guide whole of government actions to achieve gender equality and help achieve our goal of being one of the best countries in the world for equality between women and men.
- We expect the Strategy will focus on women's economic equality and independence; women's leadership; representation and rights; balancing family and care responsibilities; and health and wellbeing.
- The Strategy is being informed by a number of inputs, including the final advice of the WEET, insights from consultations led by OFW, and the comprehensive existing evidence base on gender equality.
 - The Strategy will reflect recent consultations and submissions to Government where relevant, including those prepared for the Employment White Paper.
- The Strategy will support the work of similar state and territory plans and complement other Australian Government efforts to achieve gender equality, including:
 - the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–32*;
 - the Government's response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry*;

National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

- the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Wee-Yani-U-Dung-ani) (Women's Voices) Report* and related work, including the forthcoming National Framework for Action on First Nations Gender Justice and Equality; and
- the *National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030*.
- The Strategy will build on the analysis and policy directions in the Employment White Paper to bring together Government and community action to improve economic outcomes for women.

Strategy Resources

- In the October 2022-23 Budget, the Government provided \$3.1 million in 2022-23 for the *Early Investment in a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality* measure to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to deliver a number of the Government's gender equality commitments. This included funding to develop and deliver the Strategy.
- OFW is developing the Strategy in-house, and is continuing to lead the consultation processes. As at 30 September 2023, 6 FTE are dedicated to developing the Strategy, with additional development support being provided by staff across OFW.
 - The number of staff dedicated to the Strategy has reduced since July 2023 as a result of the completion of major consultation processes and analysis efforts.
 - External support has complemented OFW efforts and to provide specialist expertise including for co-facilitation of phase one roundtables, development of a glossary, and a project to synthesise the evidence base for the Strategy.
 - OFW commissioned KPMG and a group of academics with specific gender expertise to complete a project providing an evidence base on the drivers of gender inequality. This cost \$117,152.60 (GST excl.).
 - OFW has engaged an external editor to assist with the draft Strategy, totalling \$36,400.00 (GST excl.)
 - *Refer to OFW Resourcing brief for further information.*

Strategy: Consultations

- Consultations have captured the views of over 3,000 people and organisations across Australia, over two rounds of consultation.
- First round consults (November – December 2022) included 14 targeted roundtable discussions with representatives from 124 groups across universities, the community sector, unions, businesses, and with individual subject matter experts. *Roundtable topics and dates are at [Attachment B](#).*
 - Attendees at these roundtables were selected by OFW in consultation with the National Women's Alliances, Women's Economic Equality Taskforce members, and State and Territory Offices for Women.
 - To protect the privacy of attendees, the names of individuals who attended targeted roundtable consultations are not available for public release.
 - A list of organisations who attended was provided in QoN #0387.
 - Outcomes from the roundtable consultations were made publicly available on 16 March 2023, on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.
- OFW held a standalone consultation roundtable for unions on 6 December 2022 as part of the phase one targeted roundtables. This decision was made by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet due to level of interest from unions in participating in consultation processes.
 - OFW have not met with union representatives about the Strategy outside of the consultations listed on our website.
- Second round consults opened to the public on International Women's Day and ran for six weeks (8 March – 19 April 2023) with release of a discussion paper and survey.
 - 2735 survey responses and 174 written responses to the discussion paper were received.
 - OFW provided a summary of the consultation findings to the Minister for Women on 23 May 2023.
- Under the Privacy Policy for the public consultation process, responses can only be used for Strategy development purposes within the Australian Government. This was to provide a safe consultation process to encourage a diverse range of voices and experiences to be heard.

National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

- Key points raised in consultations included the importance of an intersectional lens and consideration of gender norms, women's economic equality, health and safety from all forms of violence.

Ongoing Consultations

- The Minister for Women and OFW continue to facilitate targeted consultations with key stakeholders as we finalise development of the Strategy, including, but not limited to:
 - the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality Commonwealth Inter-departmental Committee
 - state and territory governments
 - On 28 July 2023, the Minister for Women provided the Women's and Women's Safety Ministerial Council an update on the Strategy.
 - The National Women's Alliances
 - have been consulted as a group on development of the Strategy three times so far (one roundtable, one written consultation, and a session at the annual Alliances Forum).
 - some Alliances have also individually made submissions during the process.

Strategy: First Nations approach

- OFW continue to engage with stakeholders within and outside of government to determine how we can best recognise First Nations peoples' experiences in the Strategy.
 - This includes working with the National Indigenous Affairs Agency and Australian Human Rights Commission to understand the opportunities to leverage and not duplicate the ongoing extensive work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner's Wiyi Yani U Thangani project.
 - This includes the outcomes of the recent First Nations Women's Summit held in May 2023, the upcoming National Framework for Action, and work on a First Nations Gender Justice Institute.
 - OFW participates in the Wiyi Yani U Thangani National Framework for Action Advisory Group as an opportunity to increase alignment between the Strategy and the Framework for Action wherever possible.

National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

- We note the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce has called for development of a separate First Nations Framework for Action for Gender Equality. As with all Taskforce recommendations, this will be considered by Government as development of the Strategy continues.
- The Strategy will be consistent with the cross-cutting outcome area of gender and sexuality under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
- We note that some stakeholders have called for a separate gender equality strategy tailored to the needs of First Nations peoples and this is a decision for Government.

Strategy: Implementation

- The importance of the Strategy being supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework has been highlighted by stakeholders during consultations for the Strategy.
- Any decisions on monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy will be made as part of the Government's consideration of the final Strategy.
- Use of targets within the Strategy has also been noted in a number of consultations on the Strategy. Any decisions on whether targets will be included in the Strategy will be made as part of the Government's consideration of the final Strategy.
 - *Refer to Targets Brief for further information.*

Strategy: Background

Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee 25 May 2023

- At the Estimates hearing 25 May 2023, Senator Waters sought advice on policy reforms underpinning the Strategy and whether this would include procurement reform. Senator Waters also asked about remaining steps to finalise the Strategy and whether a specific timeframe for release in late 2023 was known.
- Following the Estimates hearing 25 May 2023, Senator Hume submitted a series of questions on notice (QoN #0387) relating to the number of consultation submissions received, resourcing for Strategy development, and the selection of union representation at the roundtable. A response was tabled on 14 July 2023.

Status of Women Report Card

- A Status of Women Report Card was released on International Women's Day 2023 (8 March 2023) to provide a picture of what life looks like for women in Australia and to support ongoing discussions on the Strategy. The Government will release a Status of Women Report Card every International Women's Day to highlight contemporary areas of focus.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: National Strategy To Achieve Gender Equality Placemat – Key Information
- Attachment B: Phase one roundable topics and dates

Date:	4 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Doss Mcpherson
Branch/Section:	Gender Equality Strategy
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

FAS BACKPOCKET BRIEF: NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY PLACEMAT – KEY INFORMATION

The National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (the Strategy) is an election commitment of the Government, and aims to guide whole-of-community action to make Australia one of the best countries in the world for a gender equal society. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Office for Women are leading development of this Strategy.

The Strategy will support the work of similar state and territory plans and complement other Australian Government efforts to achieve gender equality, including the:

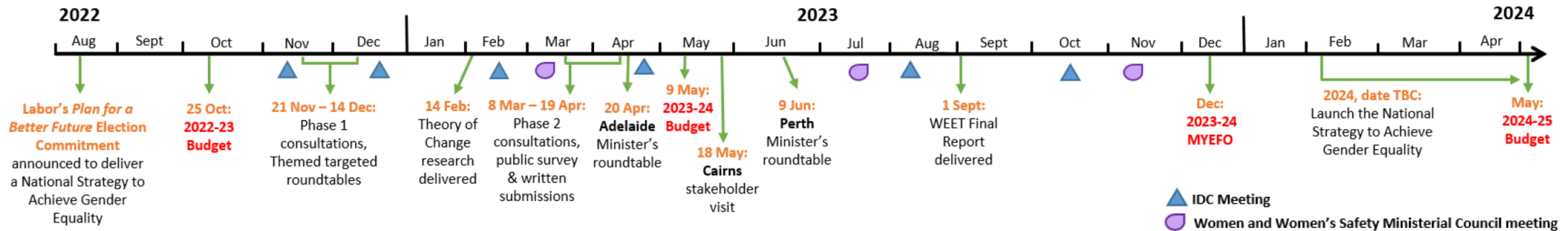
- *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–32*
- Government's response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report (2020)*;
- *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Report* and related work, including the forthcoming National Framework for Action on First nations Gender Justice and Equality; and
- *National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030*.

Financial Resourcing

The Strategy received funding as part of the \$3.1m package provided to PM&C in the October 2022-23 Budget.

- Theory of Change Research: \$117,152.60 (GST excl.)
- University of Technology Sydney, Glossary development \$4,703.70 (GST excl.)
- Strategy Editor: \$36,400.00 (GST excl.)

Project Timeline



Consultation Key Findings

Phase one and two saw over 3,000 people share their views:

- 124 attendees contributed to 14 targeted roundtables
 - Universities; Community Sector; Unions; Businesses; and individual subject matter experts
- 2,735 individual online survey responses
- 174 submissions in response to the discussion paper
- Minister led roundtables in Perth and Melbourne.

Survey Consultation findings

- 'How equally men and women are treated', saw 60% of survey respondents stating 'Not very equally' or 'very unequally'.
- 75% of respondents were women, while 18% were men and 1% identified as non-binary.
- 95% of respondents did not identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. 1.8% of respondents identified as being Aboriginal and or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- 84% of respondents did not identify as a person with disability. 13% did identify as a person with disability. 4% preferred not to say.
- 57% of respondents had some form of caring responsibilities. 7% cared for their children and other family members. 42% of respondents did not have any form of caring responsibilities.
- 32% of respondents identified with a background other than Anglo-Australian heritage, while 65% did not. 3% preferred not to say.

The 5 most common areas of concern raised through the survey by respondents:

- family and domestic violence
- sexual violence
- housing insecurity
- having enough money in retirement, and
- sexual harassment.

Key Stakeholders

- Interdepartmental Committee (IDC) (*member list to the right*)
- Women's Economic Equality Taskforce
- Six National Womens Alliances
- Relevant AHRC Commissioners
- Federal, State and Territory Governments

Key Inputs to the Strategy

- Two phases of consultations with industry, community and individuals.
- Women's Economic Equality Taskforce Budget Advice and Final Report, including recommendations for Government.
- State and Territory Governments Gender Equality Strategies.
- Theory of Change and socio-ecological model for gender equality research commissioned by PM&C's Office for Women.
- Consultations with National Women's Alliances

Written Submission Consultation findings

Women's economic equality was the most frequently raised priority, with almost 30% of respondents identifying this as a focus to achieve gender equality in Australia. This was followed by women's safety and the Government's role in progressing gender equality, each being the core issue identified for Strategy focus in 13% of responses.

Many responses raised harmful gender norms and violence against women as the key drivers of gender inequality, with many stakeholders noting we will not make progress without addressing these issues.

Key concerns raised through the discussion paper submission were:

- Harmful gender norms
- Safety, including online safety
- Australian Government role in addressing gender equality
- Economic equality
- Data limitation
- Leadership and representations.

Interdepartmental Committee members

Attorney General's Department
 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
 Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
 Department of Defence
 Department of Education
 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
 Department of Finance
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
 Department of Health and Aged Care
 Department of Home Affairs
 Department of Industry, Science and Resources
 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
 Department of Social Services
 Department of the Treasury
 National Disability Insurance Agency
 National Emergency Management Agency
 National Indigenous Australians Agency
 Workplace Gender Equality Agency
 Office of the e-Safety Commissioner

Attachment B: Phase one roundable topics and dates

Rountable	Date
Care Economy	21 November 2022
Employment (employment and peak bodies)	22 November 2022
Employment (skills and training)	22 November 2022
Housing and infrastructure	23 November 2022
Seniors	25 November 2022
Migrant and refugee women	28 November 2022
First Nations	30 November 2022
Health and wellbeing	1 December 2022
Engaging men in gender equality	2 December 2022
Diverse sexuality and gender	2 December 2022
Family and unpaid work	5 December 2022
Unions	6 December 2022
People with disability	7 December 2022
Youth	14 December 2022

A separate consultation with the National Women's Alliances was held on 18 November. This is not counted in the '14 roundtables', but was held at the same time.

Evaluation of the National Women's Alliances Model

Subject/Issue

In February 2023, OFW partnered with the Global Institute for Women's Leadership (GIWL) to evaluate the National Women's Alliance (NWA) model.

Key points

- The evaluation was designed to assess the suitability of the existing model to deliver on the objectives of the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP), specifically that:
 - Alliances advocate for women in Australia and collaborate with policy makers to inform Australian Government policies which impact women.
- The evaluation was not designed to:
 - Investigate the impact of NWA grants
 - Compare or assess the performance of individual Alliances
 - Audit grant expenditure.
- The evaluation found the NWA to be a suitable vehicle for delivering women's voices to Government and identified seven key recommendations to strengthen and improve the delivery of its objectives and outcomes.
- The evaluation concluded that while the current model appears to be achieving its intended outcomes, additional resourcing and support is needed to effectively leverage their contribution.
- The evaluation outcomes will inform future decisions on the NWA model. Arrangements for the Alliances will also be influenced by the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality and other government gender priorities.
- OFW finalised the evaluation report on 18 June 2023 and released the evaluation and its recommendations on the Office for Women website on 26 July 2023.

IF ASKED

Why was the evaluation not independent?

- OFW closely examined the benefits and risks of using a partnership approach and actively participating in the evaluation. We concluded that the benefits of a partnership outweighed the potential disadvantages.
- OFW benefited from the partnership approach by:
 - Building capability within OFW, noting that evaluation and data analysis have not been resourced functions of OFW historically.
 - Utilising external expertise where it was not available within Government.
- OFW was mindful that taking an active role in the evaluation could be perceived as a conflict of interest or could result in our own role going unchallenged.
- In order to address these risks, OFW:
 - Assigned leadership of the evaluation to an SES officer with program evaluation expertise, but who had not had a role in managing the Women's Leadership and Development Program or National Women's Alliances previously.
 - Assigned an experienced officer with a strong understanding of the program to manage the project. This officer also does not have a role in managing any program funding agreements, including those of the Alliances.
 - Engaged with the GIWL as a partnership approach to bolster the external expertise and maintain a level of transparency.

Background

- In 2010, the NWA were established following an open competitive process. The NWA have been externally evaluated twice (2012 by Urbis and 2016 by KPMG), and reviewed internally by OFW in 2020. The findings of these assessments have informed the current funding arrangements.

Evaluation partnership and method

- A limited tender process was undertaken to ensure that gender expertise was secured for the evaluation.
- One proposal was received from the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at the Australian National University.
- The Institute's proposal was assessed as meeting the requirements of the Approach to Market and it was offered the contract.
 - The total cost of the project was \$39,138 (GST Inclusive).
- The proposal from the Global Institute for Women's Leadership was successful due to its specific gender expertise and experience in analysing and shaping policy development, including evaluation of government programs.
- The evaluation's analysis comprised:
 - A desktop review of current and previous program parameters and documentation, for example, Grant Opportunity Guidelines, funding agreements and progress reports
 - Detailed interviews with key stakeholders, including each Alliance, and the auspicing body where relevant.

Date:	26 September 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Doss McPherson
Branch/Section:	Gender Equality Strategy and Reform / Grants Policy and Implementation
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

NWA Evaluation Recommendations**Resourcing**

1. Establish options to increase and extend grant funding for the Alliances, to ensure they are adequately resourced to fulfil performance expectations, and to future-proof the model's ability to deliver women's voices to Government. Options include:
 - a. Lengthening grant agreements to five years, to allow Alliances to engage in longer-term planning, employment and services.
 - b. Establish funding arrangements to cover the resource intensive forms of communication and engagement required by Alliances (e.g., for language translation, cultural safety, disability accessibility requirements, and/or travel to remote locations).
 - c. Develop guidance on options for direct funding by OFW, PMC or other Government Agencies for work that is beyond the scope of NWA activity plans.
2. Establish options to increase resourcing within OFW to ensure the program has adequate capability and capacity for effective implementation. Options include:
 - a. Support capability development, including in cultural safety and vicarious trauma, amongst relationship managers.
 - b. Allow time for meaningful engagement with Alliance representatives.
 - c. Establish options for OFW provision of administration, communications and marketing support for the Alliances to enhance program efficiency and improve program reach and visibility.

Grant management

3. Undertake consultation with Alliances about grant management processes, with the aim of:
 - d. Balancing tensions between expectations of OFW and Alliance members in content of activity plans.
 - e. Revising performance reporting requirements to better capture desired outcomes and better reflect variation in cultural and organisational practice across Alliances.
 - f. Introducing flexibility in activity requirements to accommodate responsiveness to emerging requests for policy input.

Representation

4. Establish options to further improve the inclusiveness and representativeness of the model by:
 - g. Funding a cross-Alliance youth forum.
 - h. Explicitly including transwomen and non-binary individuals in the NWA purpose.
 - a. Formally establishing LGBTQI+ representation, either in an additional Alliance or within existing Alliances

Facilitating policy engagement

5. Support the development of more collaborative and inclusive policy making to better enable the contribution of the NWA program to the objectives of the WLDP; options include:
 - i. Consider options for structuring or formalising the process by which Alliances are involved in policy-making decisions.
 - j. Supporting capability development in inclusive policy within Government.
 - a. Establish a more explicit description of policy collaboration, including the role of Government, in grant guidelines.
6. Undertake an impact evaluation of the NWA program that concentrates on women and the women's sector to better understand barriers and enablers to flow on benefits from NWA activity to WLDP objectives.

Inter-Alliance collaboration

7. Support inter-Alliance collaboration to ensure policy problems and solutions are interpreted and addressed through an intersectional lens; options include:
 - k. Establishing inter-Alliance projects to establish patterns of collaborative working.
 - l. Working with Alliances to identify appropriate platforms for inter-Alliance communication and collaboration to support knowledge sharing and trust building (e.g. regular forums, online knowledge management platform).

Office for Women Key Functions and Resourcing

Key points

- The **appointment of the new Executive Director** to the Office for Women came into effect on **18 September 2023**.
- OFW's 2023-24 Departmental budget is **\$8.8 million**¹.
 - This is a **\$2.9 million decrease** from last financial year (\$11.7 million).
 - The change in funding levels since 2022-23 is due to a combination of:
 - the end of the temporary boost in OFW's funding from the October 2022-23 Budget measure *Early Investment in a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*, which provided \$3.1 million in 2022-23; and
 - efficiency savings applied by the department.
- OFW does not have specific additional funding in 2023-24 for the finalisation of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality and the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, and the ongoing implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting. These functions are being carried out using OFW's base funding.
- As of 31 August 2023, OFW's average staffing level (ASL) is **68.1** (*excluding secondees and labour hire*).
 - This is an **increase of 0.3 ASL**, compared to the 2022-23 financial year (**67.8 ASL**)
 - This is also an **increase of 1.0 ASL**, compared to 31 March 2023 (67.1 ASL) as reported in the May 2023 Senate Estimates
 - As at 31 August 2023, OFW has **62.7 full time equivalent staff (FTE)**, with a total **headcount of 75** (89 including graduates and secondments)
 - New SESB3 and team's ASL were not captured as at 31 August 2023. The SESB3's team comprises two ASL, including the SESB3.
- In addition, there are **3 non-ongoing labour hire staff**.

¹ \$7.9 million in operational funding plus \$1.4 million provided in the Budget to support delivery of both the APS Capability Reinvestment Fund and APSC Micro-Credential Fund, less \$0.5 million for appropriations to other agencies, efficiency savings and departmental overheads.

- Labour hire staff are utilised for non-ongoing surge capacity and when the appropriate skills could not otherwise be sourced from within the APS at the time required.
- At any given time, the actual number of staff in OFW can vary, depending on long-term leave, vacancies, secondments, and timeframes for recruitment processes.

Role and functions

- OFW is responsible for driving whole-of-government reforms necessary to achieve equality, including leadership on:
 - Gender analysis across key social and economic policies
 - National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality
 - Women's Economic Equality Taskforce
 - Gender budgeting and implementing gender impact assessments across the APS, including capability uplift
 - Women's Leadership and Development Program
 - National Women's Alliances
 - Government's 50 per cent gender diversity target for women on Australian Government boards
 - Australia's targeted international engagement, including:
 - APEC Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy
 - OECD Gender Budgeting Network
 - G20 EMPOWER
 - UN Commission on the Status of Women, and
 - Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Background

OFW staffing (as at 31 August 2023)

Staffing								
2022-23 Actual ASL	Actual ASL 31 Aug 2023	Increase	Actual FTE 31 Aug 2023	Headcount Ongoing	Headcount Non- Ongoing	Total funded Headcount	Graduates & Secondees	Total Headcount
67.8	68.1	0.3	62.7	68	7	75	14	89

- As at 31 August 2023 diversity of the OFW workforce was (percentage of 77 headcount inclusive of the two graduates):
 - 93.5 per cent female and 6.5 per cent male
 - 23.4 per cent identified as culturally and linguistically diverse

54.7 per cent identified as LGBTI
 10.3 per cent identified as having a disability
 1.3 per cent identified as Indigenous

Secondments

- OFW implemented a pilot secondment program for high performing APS staff to collaborate on gender equality, build capability in gender analysis and share this knowledge within their home departments.
- Round One commenced from October 2022, applicants were sought at an EL1/EL2 level.
 - Eight secondments and one temporary transfer from seven agencies (Departments of Home Affairs; Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Defence; Industry, Science and Resources; Foreign Affairs and Trade; Social Services and the Treasury).
 - Of these, six had concluded at 31 August 2023.
- Round Two commenced from May 2023, and applicants were sought at the APS4/6 level.
 - Nine secondments from six agencies (Departments of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; Veterans' Affairs; Home Affairs; Finance; Social Services and The Federal Court).
 - Of these, one had concluded at 31 August 2023.

OFW Executive Director travel costs

- The Executive Director is based in Sydney and travels to Canberra when required for in-person meetings. The cost of *official* travel is funded by the Office for Women.
- *Non-official* travel is met by the Executive Director and is personally funded.
- *Official Travel* is defined as travel undertaken for *Official Business* for the department, including:
 - ground and air transport, accommodation and business related expenses.
- To meet requirements to be funded by PM&C, travel must be:
 - in accordance with the department's travel policies and government requirements relating to travel;
 - the most effective way to achieve the department's objectives;
 - only be undertaken where other communication tools, such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing are an ineffective option;
 - expenditure on travel must be economical, efficient, effective, ethical and can withstand public scrutiny.

*2023-24 May Budget measures*APS Capability Reinvestment Fund

The measure *APS Capability Reinvestment Fund* provided \$1.34 million in 2023-24 to support OFW to improve gender impact analysis in policy. APSC Micro-Credential Fund

- The measure *APSC Micro-Credential Fund* provided \$91,000 in 2023-24 to support OFW to work with the APSC to develop a gender analysis micro credential.

*2022-23 October Budget measure*National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

- The measure *Early Investment in a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality* provided \$3.1 million in 2022-23 to support OFW to deliver the Government's election commitments, including:
 - research and stakeholder engagement activities to develop the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality
 - funding to establish the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce and for them commission advice and research
 - initial investments in gender budgeting, including \$350,000 in APS gender analysis capability and funding for a partnership with the OECD
 - delivering a new grant round to encourage more women across the political spectrum to run for public office.
- All funds were expended by 30 June 2023.

- We have spent/committed \$3.24² million on the following priorities (funded from the October 2022-23 Budget, WLDP administered funding and OFW departmental budget), (Attachment A refers):
 - \$0.45 million OECD to undertake a review of gender mainstreaming and budgeting in Australia providing support in establishing Gender Budgeting
 - \$0.30 million for tailored training across the APS in gender analysis and capability development plan
 - \$0.16 million WEET member travel and sitting fees for meetings to date and expected meetings to the end of their term (including the funds from WLDP)
 - \$0.33 million advice, research to enable the WEET's work, final report and engagements (WEET adviser to the Taskforce Chair of \$0.18 million, Paid Parental Leave of \$0.07 million, final report design and copywriting of \$0.07 million and WEET engagements of \$9k with 2022-23 and 2023-24 funds also from WLDP)
 - \$0.11 million Theory of Change report to assist in the development and design the National Strategy
 - \$0.06 million for the stakeholder engagement (roundtable discussions) to support the development and launch of the National Strategy
 - \$0.02 million for editing services of the National Strategy paper
 - \$0.01 million for glossary advice and easy read version of National Strategy discussion paper
 - \$0.01 million for social media listening report to analyse public commentary to identify and better understand public sentiment and emerging issues relating to gender equality
 - \$0.11 million grant management for Women in Public Office grant round
 - \$1.55 million staffing to deliver (\$0.35 million in labour hire and remaining in APS staff)
 - \$0.13 million departmental overheads.

² This figure does not include future 2023-24 commitments that are outlined in Attachment A.

Early Investment in a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality

Payments (\$m)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	-	3.1	-	-	-

The Government will provide additional funding of \$3.1 million in 2022–23 to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to enable the Office for Women to:

- develop a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality
- support the independent Women’s Economic Equality Taskforce
- provide support across government for the implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting and Gender Impact Assessments.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality 2022-23 and YTD 31 August 2023 Expenditure

Date:

Cleared by (SES):

Group/Branch:

Contact Officers:

Telephone No:

Consultation:

26 September 2023

Doss Mcpherson

Office for Women

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Nil

National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality Measure Budget and Expenditure

As at 2022-23 and YTD 31 August 2023 (GST exclusive)

	Total Budget Allocation (\$)	Total Expenditure (\$)	2023-24 Committed (\$)	Total Expended & Committed (\$)	Comments
Stream 1: National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (Departmental)	948,524.84	600,392.34	267,876.92	868,269.26	
1A - Developing comprehensive background paper, summarising previous reviews, submission, and academic literature	80,000.00	4,703.70	-	4,703.70	\$5k paid for glossary writer
1B - Develop a gender equality architecture in line with calls from the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce for an evidence-based framework underpinning our roadmap towards gender equality	180,000.00	113,834.27	-	113,834.27	\$0.11 million paid for Theory of Change paper
1C - Undertake stakeholder engagement and communications activities to support the development and launch of the National Strategy	250,000.00	75,629.75	9,090.91	84,720.66	\$0.08 million expended for: - \$0.06 million roundtable costs; - \$0.01 million for social media listening; and - \$5k for easy read discussion paper. Additional \$9k committed for easy read version of the National Strategy paper
1D - Copyediting, graphics, design, layout and print of the National Strategy	125,000.00	18,000.00	18,400.00	36,400.00	\$0.02 million for editing services paid with remaining \$0.02 million to be paid in 2023-24.
1E - Print and online advertising for engagement activities	50,000.00	110.92	21,818.18	21,929.10	\$18k for printing and launch of event and \$4k for advertising
1F - Contractor costs	263,524.84	388,113.70	218,567.83	606,681.53	\$0.39 million paid for Nat Strat Secretariat, budget coordinator, adviser, policy adviser (EL1) and divisional coordinator with remaining \$0.22 million committed.
Stream 2: Implementation of GIA and GRB (Departmental)	904,729.51	749,956.53	-	749,956.53	
2A - Develop public service training curriculum, with costs based on actual costs for Victoria's toolkit	350,000.00	297,233.95	-	297,233.95	\$0.30 million paid for: - \$0.13 million for GIA capability development plan; - \$0.10 million for GIA training content development; and - \$0.07 million for masterclasses/workshops.
2B - Engage the OECD to provide expert support on Gender Budgeting consistent with approaches taken in other leading economies	410,000.00	452,722.58	-	452,722.58	Additional \$0.05 million was included in the OECD contract (\$0.45 million) for GRB to account for fluctuations in currency exchange.
2C - Contractor costs	144,729.51	-	-	-	

	Total Budget Allocation (\$)	Total Expenditure (\$)	2023-24 Committed (\$)	Total Expended & Committed (\$)	Comments
Stream 3: Women's Economic Equality (Departmental & Administered)	833,500.00	457,956.99	28,624.50	486,581.49	WEET was initially funded \$0.10 million from administered and \$0.71 million from departmental. With Minister's authority (MS23-000166), funds were reallocated resulting in \$0.41 million from administered and remaining \$0.40 million from departmental funding. This action redirected equivalent unspent departmental funds to provide some relief to departmental resourcing pressures.
3A - Taskforce member fees and travel costs	306,000.00	157,075.86	1,124.50	158,200.36	\$0.16 expended for: - \$0.13 million member sitting fees; and - \$0.03 million for member travel costs.
3B - Taskforce commissioned research and advice	527,500.00	300,881.13	27,500.00	328,381.13	\$0.30 million paid for: - \$0.15 million for special adviser to Taskforce Chair; - \$0.07 million for Paid Parental Leave research; - \$0.07 million for final report design and copywriting; and - \$9k for engagement activities. Remaining \$0.03 million committed for special adviser to Taskforce Chair to finalise the WEET advice.
3C - Contractor costs	237,590.65	73,063.57	-	73,063.57	\$0.07 million paid for WEET administration officer
Stream 4: WLDP Grant Management (Departmental)	187,403.00	105,336.67	2,642.50	107,979.17	\$0.11 million expended for Women in Public Office grant round administration costs
Staff Resourcing	-	1,195,903.65	-	1,195,903.65	\$1.20 million expended on staffing to facilitate the administrative work of WEET, Nat Strat, GIA/GRB, etc.
Total	3,111,748.00	3,182,609.75	299,143.92	3,481,753.67	

	Total Budget Allocation (\$)	Total Expenditure (\$)	2023-24 Committed (\$)	Total Expended & Committed (\$)	Comments for Commitments
Contractors (Departmental)					
Stream 1: National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality	263,524.84	388,113.70	218,567.83	606,681.53	\$0.39 million paid for Nat Strat Secretariat, budget coordinator, adviser, policy adviser (EL1) and divisional coordinator with remaining \$0.22 million committed.
Stream 2: Implementation of GIA and GRB	144,729.51	-	-	-	
Stream 3: Women's Economic Equality (Departmental)	237,590.65	73,063.57	-	73,063.57	\$0.07 million paid for WEET administration officer
Total	645,845.00	461,177.27	218,567.83	679,745.10	

*Negative expense relate to accrual reversals higher than actual payments as at 31 August 2023 due to actual WEET member fees lower than accrued costs and some of the members no longer required to be paid for any additional sitting fees.

Paid Parental Leave

Subject/Issue

The Government has made changes to Paid Parental Leave (PPL) to encourage increased uptake by fathers and support gender equality.

OFW Role

- The Office for Women provides policy advice on the gendered dimensions of unpaid care and PPL, and their implications for women's workforce participation.
- The Office for Women has facilitated consultation between the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET), stakeholders and academics, to support the WEET to provide advice on the optimal policy settings for PPL.

Key Points

- The Government is investing \$531.6 million over four years from 2022-23 (and ongoing funding of \$619.3 million per year from 2026-27) to extend PPL and increase the flexibility of the program.
 - On 1 July 2023, the PPL scheme combined into a single 20-week gender-neutral entitlement. It retains two weeks 'reserved leave' for each parent, and allows both parents to take two weeks leave at the same time.
 - From 1 July 2024, the PPL scheme will be expanded by two additional weeks a year until it reaches 26 weeks from 1 July 2026.
 - On 19 October 2023, legislation to support the final settings of the PPL scheme was introduced. The legislation seeks to increase the reserved period for each parent to four weeks each, with the remaining leave able to be shared however the parents choose. This legislation would also extend the concurrency limit to four weeks.
 - This is consistent with advice that the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce provided on the final settings for the entitlement on 9 June 2023. This advice was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website on 19 October 2023.
- (See [Attachment A](#) for a more detailed summary of changes).
- On 2 March 2023, Minister Gallagher noted the Government is committed to paying super on PPL when the budget allows.

Background

Current Settings

- PPL is paid at national minimum wage, currently \$812.45 per week.
- Prior to the recent changes on 1 July 2023, the Government-funded PPL scheme comprised of 2 payments, paid at the weekly rate of the national minimum wage:
 - Parental Leave Pay for up to 18 weeks to the birth parent; and
 - Dad and Partner Pay (DaPP) for up to 2 weeks to fathers and partners.
- From 1 July 2023 the PPL scheme combined the DaPP with Parental Leave Pay, extending Parental Leave Pay to a 20-week, gender-neutral entitlement.
- To be eligible for Parental Leave Pay, the recipient must:
 - Be the primary carer;
 - Meet the income test;
 - Individual taxable income of \$168,865 or less in the 2022-23 financial year; or
 - Combined adjustable income of up to \$350,000 in the applicable financial year.
 - Meet the work test;
 - Have worked for 10/13 months before the birth, and
 - Have worked a minimum of 330 hours (1 day per week) in the 10 months before the birth.
- Uptake of the Government's PPL Scheme is highly gender segregated: 99 per cent of Parental Leave Pay recipients are women and 99 per cent of DaPP recipients are men.
 - In 2020–21, 89,784 fathers and partners received DaPP, accounting for only around 30 per cent of births in Australia. By contrast, 169,029 mothers received PPL, accounting for 57 per cent of births. ¹
 - While employer-provided primary carers leave is becoming increasingly available to both men and women, only 12 per cent of those who took it in 2020–21 were men. ²

¹ Department of Social Services (2021) *Annual report 2020-21*, Canberra, pp 99–101

² WGEA (Workplace Gender Equality Agency) (2022) *Australia's gender equality scorecard 2020–21*, Sydney, February 2022.

- Following parenthood, women typically make significant and long-term adjustments to their paid employment, while men's employment remains largely unchanged.
- Women in Australia face a 'motherhood penalty'. Women's earnings are reduced by an average of 55 per cent in the first 5 years of parenthood. Financial penalty persists even among women who continue to work – their incomes are about 5 per cent lower than if they had not had children.³

Sensitivities

Small business

- Senators David Pocock and Jacqui Lambie moved that the potential impacts of the Commonwealth PPL scheme on small business and their employees be referred to the Community Affairs Reference Committee for inquiry.
 - The final report was completed on the 31 August 2023.
- The key recommendation from the report is that the *Paid Parental Leave Act 2010* be amended to require the DSS Secretary, as defined by the Act, to pay Parental Leave Pay instalments directly to employees of small businesses (defined as business employing fewer than 20 employees) except in cases where a small business opts to pay Parental Leave Pay instalments directly to an employee.
- The report also concluded that the Committee is not convinced that having employers making PPL payments (as opposed to Services Australia) is critical to maintaining workplace connections for small businesses.

Handling Advice

- Refer questions on PPL to the Department of Social Services as the responsible agency.

Date:	23 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section:	Workforce Participation
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

³ Bahar E, Deutscher N, Bradshaw N and Montaigne M (2022) *Children and the Gender Earnings Gap*, Treasury Round Up, October 2022.

Attachment A – Summary of PPL changes

SUMMARY OF THE PPL CHANGES														
Stage		Details												
STAGE ONE: STRENGTHEN AND MODERNISE THE PPL SCHEME <u>On 1 July 2023</u> <i>Legislation passed on 6 March 2023</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a 20-week Parental Leave Payment (PLP)• Two weeks of leave reserved for each parent on a use it or lose it basis.• Either parent able to claim PLP first, with the permission from the birth mother or adoptive parent.• Allow parents to claim two weeks of PLP concurrently.• Allow parents to claim PLP at the same time as employer-paid leave entitlements (not allowed under the previous Dad and Partner Pay).• Allow a non-birth parent to receive PLP where they meet the residency and/or newly arrived waiting period requirements, even if the birth parent does not. The birth parent will still need to meet the work test for either parent to be eligible.• Increase flexibility so parents can take the entitlement in blocks as small as a day at a time, with periods of work in-between, within two years of the child’s birth or adoption.• Introduce a family income test of \$350,000, which claimants can be assessed under if they do not meet the existing individual income test (\$156,647).												
STAGE TWO: EXPAND THE PPL SCHEME <u>From 1 July 2024</u> <i>Legislation introduced on 19 October 2023</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An additional two weeks will be added each year from July 2024 to July 2026, increasing the overall length of PLP by six weeks.<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Total PPL weeks</td><td>20</td><td>22</td><td>24</td><td>26</td></tr></tbody></table>• Both parents will be able to share the leave entitlement, with a proportion reserved for each parent on a use it or lose it basis.• The following settings will apply, pending the passage of legislation:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ On 1 July 2024, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 18 weeks to 20 weeks, maintaining the reserved period and the concurrency limit at two weeks each;○ On 1 July 2025, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 20 weeks to 21 weeks, the reserved period will increase to three weeks, and the concurrency limit will increase to four weeks; and○ On 1 July 2026, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 21 weeks to 22 weeks, the reserved period will increase to four weeks, and the concurrency limit will be maintained at four weeks.• Single parents will be able to access the full PLP entitlement at every stage of the reforms.				2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total PPL weeks	20	22	24	26
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27										
Total PPL weeks	20	22	24	26										

ParentsNext

Subject/Issue

The Government will abolish the ParentsNext program from 1 July 2024 and develop a replacement voluntary program, designed in consultation with parents.

OFW Role

- OFW seconded a staff member to Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) from 24 May 2023 to 29 September 2023 to support policy development and consultation on the replacement program.
- OFW A/g Assistant Secretary, Women's Economic Policy, participated in weekly government SES Band 1/2 IDCs to consider details of the draft principles and approach to consultation and progress of the replacement program.
 - IDC members include first assistant secretaries and assistant secretaries of OFW, Treasury, Finance, PM&C, Social Services, Education, Services Australia, National Indigenous Australians Agency.
- OFW continues to work closely with DEWR throughout the co-design process.
 - OFW has applied a gender lens to the development of the replacement voluntary program, noting the majority of ParentsNext participants have consistently been women.

Key points

- There are currently 89,925 parents participating in ParentsNext (as at 31 August 2023), an 8.9 per cent decline since the program was made voluntary on 5 May 2023.
- As at 31 August 2023:
 - 95.9 per cent of ParentsNext participants are women
 - 77.3 per cent are single parents
 - 21.3 per cent are First Nations
 - 18.0 per cent are culturally and linguistically diverse

- 14.8 per cent are people with a disability.

Note that these statistics are not mutually exclusive, as parents may have multiple characteristics.

- From 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022 (while the program was still mandatory), 31,784 ParentsNext participants had their payment suspended. This represents approximately 33 per cent of participants in the program:
 - 93.8 per cent of these suspensions were applied to women and 81.4 per cent were single parents.
 - 31 per cent of these suspensions applied to First Nations parents, much higher than their share of the caseload (21.3 per cent).
- ParentsNext providers and Services Australia can grant exemptions for participants who are temporarily unable to participate due to extenuating circumstances, noting however that ParentsNext participants can choose whether or not to participate.
 - From 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, 25,367 participants had an exemption granted.
- From the rollout of the national program in 2018 to 30 September 2022, more than 220,000 participants commenced in ParentsNext. Key participant outcomes include:
 - 110,242 (approximately 50 per cent) had commenced education
 - 66,293 (approximately 30 per cent) had declared earnings.
- As at 31 August 2023, 51.7 per cent of Workforce Australia caseloads were women.
- DEWR has begun a co-design process for a voluntary replacement program. OFW will continue to work closely with the Department through this process.
 - As the new settings are developed, eligible parents will continue to be referred to ParentsNext and will still receive help to plan and prepare for employment, including financial assistance to undertake education or training.

Background

2023-24 Budget

- On 5 May 2023, the Government announced it will abolish the ParentsNext program from 1 July 2024 and develop a replacement voluntary program.
 - As a first step, on 5 May 2023 compulsory aspects of ParentsNext were paused, while the program is designed in consultation with stakeholders. This means that participants are no longer subject to payment suspensions or penalties for not engaging with mandatory activities under ParentsNext, such as attending appointments.
- DEWR is leading the development of the new replacement program and has undertaken extensive stakeholder consultation to inform the co-design of a replacement voluntary program.
 - This included over 250 parents participating in workshops, 40 design workshops and 2000+ survey responses.
 - DEWR consulted with the National Women's Alliances on 5 September 2023.

Parliamentary Inquiries

- The ParentsNext program has been reviewed by three different Parliamentary inquiries since 2018:

House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services

- The Committee released an interim report on ParentsNext on 1 March 2023.
 - The Committee recommended that ParentsNext be abolished at the end of its current contract (current contract ends June 2024) and be replaced with a new pre-vocational service via a co-design process.
- On 21 December 2022, the Committee invited OFW to provide a submission to the inquiry into employment services in Australia.
 - While OFW did not provide a written submission to the Committee, OFW provided comments to DEWR's draft submission on 20 February 2023.

Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into the Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements – class of persons) Instrument 2021 (August 2021)

- The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (the committee) conducted an inquiry into the Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements – class of persons) Instrument from March to August 2021. The committee tabled its report on 4 August 2021.
 - The Committee recommended that participation in ParentsNext be made voluntary, and if not voluntary, then the compliance effects eased.
- A Government response has not yet been tabled.

Senate Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry into ParentsNext (March 2019)

- The Senate Community Affairs References Committee conducted an inquiry into ParentsNext from December 2018 to March 2019.
 - The Committee recommended that the program should not continue in its current form, and be reshaped through co-design with parents and experts into a more supportive pre-employment program.
- The Government response was tabled on 1 August 2019, reiterating support for the program and committing to identifying further program improvements.

Key Stakeholders' inputs and positions

- The Government's decision to abolish ParentsNext and to develop a voluntary replacement program is consistent with the recommendations of the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee (EIAC), the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, the interim report of the House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services and the final report of the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care.
- On 24 March 2023, the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET) wrote to the Minister for Women advising on its immediate priorities for the 2023-24 Budget, including abolishing ParentsNext and reinvesting in a new evidence-based program co-designed with young parents.
 - On 18 April 2023, the WEET advice was published on the PM&C website.
- On 18 April 2023, the interim EIAC report was published on Department of Social Services website. The EIAC recommended the Government abolish the ParentsNext program.

Handling Advice

- Refer any further questions on ParentsNext to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Date:	9 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section:	Workforce Participation
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	SPD

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Subject/Issue

Workplace sexual harassment is driven by gender inequality and is a form of gender based violence experienced disproportionately by women.

Key points

- The Government has committed to the full implementation of the *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report* (Respect@Work Report).
- There has been significant progress, and substantive work to implement all 55 recommendations is largely complete.
- The Minister for Women has portfolio responsibility for three recommendations (6, 42 and 43).
 - Recommendation 6 - to develop a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality – is in progress and is expected to be delivered in 2024.
 - Recommendations 42 and 43, which OFW and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) supported the Attorney General's Department (AGD) to implement, are now complete.

Refer to WGEA for further information on recommendations 42 and 43

- The Government has referred the outstanding issue of an appropriate costs model (Recommendation 25) in anti-discrimination proceedings to the Attorney-General's Department for review.
 - This was in recognition of the concerns raised by stakeholders and advocates, and the lack of consensus about the most appropriate costs model.
 - The review is underway and is due to be completed in May 2023, with a view to introducing legislative amendments as soon as possible after that time.

Refer to the Attorney General's Department for further information on rec 25

Implementation status of recommendations 6, 42 and 43.

Recommendation	Status
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u></p> <p>Deliver a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (the National Strategy)</p>	<p>The National Strategy is anticipated to be finalised in 2024.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 42</u></p> <p>Work with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and the Workplace Sexual Harassment Council to consider how development of good practice indicators (Recommendation 46), being led by the Attorney General's Department, may apply to reporting in relation to sexual harassment under the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012</i></p>	<p>Implemented upon registration of the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023</i> on 03 February 2023. This means employers required to report to WGEA will now need to report more data surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace.</p>
<p>Recommendation 43 a)</p> <p>Amend the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012</i>, to require public sector organisations with 100 or more employees to report to WGEA on gender equality indicators</p>	<p>Implemented upon assent of the <i>Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Act 1 2022</i>.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 43b</u></p> <p>Fund WGEA adequately to meet these expanded reporting obligations (noting 2023 amendments have been finalised and reporting commences in 2024)</p>	<p>Implemented through the 2022-23 March budget.</p>

For more information on Recs 42 and 43 please refer to the Workplace Gender Equality Review Backpocket Brief.

Background

- The Sex Discrimination Commissioner's Respect@Work Report was released on 5 March 2020 and made 55 recommendations addressed to all levels of government, independent government agencies, the private sector and the community to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in Australian workplaces.
- The Attorney-General and the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations are leading implementation of the Respect@Work Report at the Commonwealth level.
 - They have partnered with the Ministers for Women, Social Services, Education, Skills and Training, and Health on individual recommendations.
- The Australian Government committed funding through the October 2022 budget of \$42.5 million over four years from 2022-23 to implement report recommendations:
 - \$10.5 million over four years to enable the Human Rights Commission to receive historical disclosures of sexual harassment, educate employers about the new positive duty to take reasonable action to prevent workplace sexual harassment and provide a one stop shop for information and referral services (recommendations 17, 18 and 27).
 - \$32 million over four years to implement Working Women's Centres in all states and territories, which provide free advice and assistance to women on issues including workplace sexual harassment, discrimination and wage theft (recommendation 49).
 - \$83.5 million over six years to implement the Government's consent and respectful relationships election commitment (recommendation 10).
 - \$15.1 million over four years to include an explicit prohibition on sexual harassment in the workplace, through the Fair Work Act 2009 (recommendation 28).

Key facts and figures

- The 2022 survey entitled *Time for Respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian Workplaces* found one in three workers experienced workplace sexual harassment in the last five years
 - 41 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men reported sexual harassment
- Deloitte Access Economics modelling undertaken for the Respect@Work Report estimated that in 2018 workplace sexual harassment cost the economy \$2.6 billion in lost productivity.
- The Respect@Work Report noted that First Nations people are more likely to have experienced sexual harassment than non-Indigenous Australians (53% compared to 32%).

- The Respect@Work Report also cited that women with a disability are more likely to have experienced sexual harassment than other Australians (52%).
- Most people who experience sexual harassment never report it due to fear the impact that complaining will have on their reputation, career prospects and relationships within their community or industry.

Date: 3 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: Social Policy and International Engagement
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil

STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT CARD

Subject/Issue

The Government released a Status of Women Report Card on International Women's Day 2023 (8 March 2023). The Report Card will be updated annually.

Key points

- The Government released a Status of Women Report Card on International Women's Day 2023 (8 March 2023) to provide a picture of what life looks like for women in Australia.
 - To complement the Report Card (included in Attachment A), a Status of Women Report Card – Expanded Data table (Attachment B) was also released.
 - The Expanded Data table includes more comprehensive data across the life course to align with the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality currently in development
- The data shows the challenges women and girls in Australia face across key areas of life; in education, economic outcomes, health, safety and wellbeing, housing, and gender norms.
- While Australia has made great progress towards gender equality, there are a number of areas where progress is slowing or stalled.
 - This is demonstrated in economic outcomes including lower labour force participation rates, lower superannuation balances and a continuing gender pay gap.
 - This is also evident in social and health outcomes including higher rates of unpaid work and care, higher rates of sexual violence, and increasing rates of homelessness.
- The Report Card and Expanded Data table were both published on the PM&C website, where they are publicly available for download.
 - The Minister for Women announced the launch of the Report Card on ABC News and also featured the Report Card on her social media platforms.
- The Government will release an updated Status of Women Report Card every International Women's Day to shine a light on where progress is slow and more effort is needed.

Background

- OFW was asked by the Minister for Women's Office to prepare the Report Card on 16 February 2023.
- OFW identified the range of issues and themes covered in the Status of Women Report Card to align with the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality. This involved including key data across the 'life course' for women in Australia.
- OFW drew on existing key data products developed and maintained in-house across different policy areas. These all contain publicly available data from a range of data sources including those published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), the Melbourne Institute via the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey (HILDA), the Global Institute for Women's Leadership, and others.
- OFW will continue to monitor progress on gender equality in Australia to inform the development and release of the Status of Women Report Card for 2024.

Attachment

- Attachment A: Status of Women Report Card
- Attachment B: Expanded Data – Status of Women Report Card

Date:	21/09/2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Social Policy and International Engagement Branch, Evidence
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

Targets

Subject/Issue

The Australian Government is considering the use of targets to monitor progress under the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (the Strategy).

Key points

- To ensure accountability, the Government is considering the use of ambitious and measurable targets to monitor progress towards achieving gender equality under the Strategy.
- In public consultations, stakeholders advocated for the use of targets to monitor progress under the Strategy.
- We are having discussions with other Government agencies about the development of targets.
- Development of targets would be evidence-based and informed by a range of inputs, including consultation feedback, the final advice of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce and evidence on the effectiveness of existing Government targets and frameworks.
- Should the Government decide to proceed, targets would also complement or align with existing Government targets or work underway through other plans and strategies.
 - This includes alignment with targets in the Outcomes Framework under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.
- Ultimately, the use of targets in the Strategy will be a decision for Government.

Background

- Targets are effective tools to encourage and measure change.
 - In the workplace, targets close gaps, such as in leadership, and prevent companies from going backwards.¹
 - Regular benchmarking of progress against economy-wide targets, such as a reduction in the gender pay gap, ensures Government is held accountable for improving gender equality for all Australians.
- Recognising the important role that a target can play in accelerating progress, there are now a number of Government gender equality targets.
- These include:
 - The Government has set five new targets in the Outcomes Framework 2023-2032 under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*:
 - 25 per cent reduction per year in female victims of intimate partner homicide
 - 2 point increase in the mean Understanding of Violence against Women Scale every four years, reflecting an increase in community understanding of violence against women
 - 2 point increase in the mean Attitudes towards Violence against Women Scale every four years, reflecting an increase in community attitudes that condemn violence against women
 - 2 point increase in the mean Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale every four years, reflecting an increase in community attitudes rejecting gender inequality
 - 2 point increase in the mean Sexual Violence Scale every four years, reflecting an increase in community attitudes that reject sexual violence.
 - Under this Outcomes Framework, the Government has also recommitted to Closing the Gap Target 13:
 - By 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero.
 - The Government has a target of 50 per cent women on Australian Government Boards.
 - In 2009, the Government committed to a gender diversity target of women holding 40 per cent of government boards positions overall.
 - Following the achievement of the 40 per cent target the Government committed to an increased gender diversity target of women holding 50 per cent of Government board positions overall from 1 July 2016,

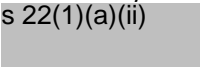
- and introduced a new target of women and men each holding at least 40 per cent of positions at the individual board level.
- The 50 per cent target was first met in 31 December 2021 reporting, with women holding 50.2 per cent of positions.
 - At 31 December 2022, women filled 51.4 per cent of positions on Australian Government Boards.
 - OFW worked with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to ensure there was a target within the Australian Skills Guarantee to double the proportion of women in apprenticeships and traineeships, working on Commonwealth funded major construction projects over \$10 million.
 - Australia is committed to the Brisbane 2014 G20 target to reduce the workforce participation gap between men and women, aged 15-64, by 25 per cent by 2025.
 - To reach the target, Australia is required to narrow the gap to below 9.1 percentage points, 25 per cent (3 percentage points) below 2012 levels.
 - Australia met the target in March 2020, with a gap of 9.1 percentage points. There were subsequent monthly fluctuations and the gap widened due to the impact of COVID-19.
 - Australia re-surpassed the target in February 2021 and remained at 7.4 percentage points in March 2023 from a record low of 7.3 percentage points in December 2022 (12-month average of seasonally adjusted data).
 - Through implementation of the recommendations of the review of the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012, the Government will be asking large employers to set gender equality targets.
 - In previous Senate Estimates, targets on the gender pay gap and workforce participation were raised (Attachment A):
 - The gender pay gap currently costs the Australian economy \$51.8 billion a year in lost income.²
 - Closing the gap in participation rates would increase GDP by \$353 billion by 2050.³
 - NSW Treasury found that eliminating gaps in participation, full-time work, and pay would increase the size of the NSW economy by 15 per cent, and add \$33,000 to average household income.⁴

Attachment A: October 2022 Senate Estimates – Question on Notice

Senator Gallagher: ... Ultimately, yes, we would like to see the areas where we see inequality narrow and close entirely, but that's going to take a period of time.

Senator HUME: Are there KPIs attached to that, formal or informal? Do you have it written down? Do you say, 'We want to close the gender pay gap by X', or 'We want to increase participation rates by Y'?

Senator Gallagher: We've got \$3.1 million in the budget to support the development of the national gender equality strategy. We are working up a consultation process around that. That is exactly where those discussions need to go. Through that strategy, which will guide further decisions, those questions will be answered. We're at the beginning of that work, not the end of it. The Women's Economic Equality Taskforce also has this concept of what constitutes a gender-equal Australia—what does that look like on its agenda, through the work it's doing?—and it will use that to help inform that strategy.

Date: 05/10/23
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: Social Policy and International Engagement / Evidence
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: 
Consultation: Nil

¹ CEW (2022). [*Senior Executive Census 2022*](#).

² KPMG, Diversity Council Australia, WGEA (2022). [*She's Price\(d\)less – The economics of the gender pay gap*](#).

³ Equity Economics (2021). [*Back of the pack: How Australia's parenting policies are failing women & our economy*](#).

⁴ NSW Treasury (2022). [*TRP22-19: Women's economic opportunities in the NSW labour market and the impact of early childhood education and care*](#).

WEET: Key Deliverables

Key Points

- The WEET's final report and advice on the 2023-24 Budget are their major deliverables to Government.
- In addition, the Taskforce contributed to a range of Government priorities to drive women's economic equality, including:
 - the **National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality**.
 - Selection of first phase consultation invitees, observing the first phase of consultations, consideration of early evidence gathered and work undertaken by academics on the architecture to support change.
 - the **Employment White Paper**.
 - Treasury provided an update on the White Paper and Women's Budget Statement in Taskforce meetings on 21 September 2022, 2 November 2022 and 23 January 2023. Treasury also provided a standalone briefing on 11 October 2022.
 - advice on the **Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme** to inform the *Paid Parental Leave Amendment (Improvements for Families and Gender Equality) Bill 2022*.
 - advice on the final design of the **expansion of the PPL scheme** from 1 July 2024.
 - **engaging across the APS** to influence outcomes to benefit women's economic equality including:
 - the Care and Support Economy Taskforce (in PM&C);
 - the Behavioural Economics Team of Australia (BETA in PM&C);
 - Department of Employment and Workplace Relations;
 - Department of Education; and
 - Department of Social Services.
- Members of the Taskforce have also met with:
 - **Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services** in relation to ParentsNext.
 - **OECD delegation** for the Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting Review in Australia.

- The Chair attended the **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation** Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy in the United States.
 - The Chair delivered a keynote address on Unpaid Care and Structural Reform, advocating for greater awareness of the economic cost of not valuing the care economy and drawing attention to the need to rebalance unpaid care.

OFW Role

- OFW provided the WEET with secretariat, administrative and policy support.
 - This included organising briefing sessions with relevant Departments and external experts.

WEET: Final Advice

- The Chair provided the WEET's final advice and recommendations to the Minister for Women on 1 September 2023.
 - A preview of the recommendations was provided on 23 August 2023.
 - The recommendations did not change between the preview and the final report.
 - The recommendations were provided shortly after the conclusion of the Chair's term.
- The final report was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website on **23 October 2023**.
- The final report and recommendations are being considered by Government, including through the development of the National Strategy.
- The recommendations cover themes such as care, work, education and skills, the tax and transfer system, and the role of Government.
- There is already work under way that will support implementation of many of the recommendations, such as the modernisation of the Commonwealth Paid Parental Leave Scheme, the abolishment and replacement of ParentsNext, continuing workplace relations reforms, the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Early Childhood Education and Care, the National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy and the development of the National Strategy.

OFW Role

- As an independent Taskforce, the WEET drafted their own final recommendations.
- OFW supported the Taskforce by fact-checking and providing publicly available evidence and data.

If pressed on whether OFW was consulted on the final recommendations:

- The WEET considered a number of inputs when drafting the final recommendations, including the available evidence, views from members and their own consultation processes, including with the Office for Women.
- OFW did not clear or sign off on the WEET's final recommendations.

If asked: will the Government implement the WEET recommendations to pay superannuation on Paid Parental Leave (PPL) and provide universal, affordable child care?

- The Government reforms to PPL are the largest single enhancements to PPL since its introduction in 2011.
 - The changes to PPL ensure the Government enhances the scheme in a fiscally responsible way.
 - The Government intends to pay superannuation on Paid Parental Leave, when the Budget allows.
- The Government has committed \$4.7 billion to increase the Child Care Subsidy rate, making early childhood education and care (ECEC) more affordable for around 1.26 million families. This came into effect in July 2023.
- The Government has asked the Productivity Commission to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into the ECEC sector, which commenced in the first half of 2023, with a final report due on 30 June 2024. It will consider options for universal, affordable child care.
 - The Government will consider the advice of the WEET together with the outcomes of the Productivity Commission Inquiry.

WEET: Advice on Paid Parental Leave

- The Government asked the WEET to provide advice on the optimal Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme, including on:
 - how additional weeks should be accessed to maximise women's economic equality;
 - how much leave can be taken concurrently with another parent; and
 - the amount of reserved leave available to each parent.

Stage One advice - reforms to commence from 1 July 2023

- On 16 November 2022, the WEET provided its first stage of interim advice to Ministers Gallagher and Rishworth via letter.
 - The Ministers asked for the WEET's initial advice to inform the first tranche of amendments to the *Paid Parental Leave Act 2010*.
 - The Ministers asked for advice on the final design of the scheme in terms of how the extra weeks of leave should be accessed to maximise women's economic equality.
 - s 47C
- s 47C
 - foreshadowed that it would provide advice in Stage Two on the other PPL settings and reforms required to maximise gender equitable outcomes and greater sharing of care between women and men in Australia.
- The WEET's **Stage One advice informed the *Paid Parental Leave Amendment (Improvements for Families and Gender Equality) Bill 2022***, which passed through both houses on 6 March 2023, to effect the reforms that commenced from 1 July 2023.
 - This sees two weeks of reserved leave and retains two weeks concurrent leave.
 - The WEET advised their final advice on recommended setting may differ from their initial advice. The Government sought to avoid legislating changes now that may be inconsistent with this advice.
- **NOTE: The WEET's stage one advice is not publicly available.**
 - This is a decision for the Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services.

Stage Two advice – reforms to commence from 1 July 2024

- On 9 June 2023, the WEET provided its second, final stage of advice to Minister Gallagher via letter.
 - The WEET provided advice on the final design of the 26 weeks, recommending four weeks reserved leave for each parent, and four weeks concurrent leave.
 - The WEET also recommended the Government evaluate the benefits and impacts of extending the PPL scheme to 52 weeks.
- The WEET's Stage Two advice was published on the PM&C website on 19 October 2023.
- On 19 October 2023, the *Paid Parental Leave Amendment (More Support for Working Families) Bill 2023* was introduced to Parliament.
- The Bill supports the final settings of the Paid Parental Leave scheme by increasing the reserved period and concurrency limit to four weeks each, as recommended by the WEET.
- The legislation will effect the PPL expansion slated to commence from 1 July 2024.
 - This sees the scheme expanding by two additional weeks a year until the scheme reaches its full 26 weeks from 1 July 2026.
 - On 1 July 2024, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 18 to 20 weeks, maintaining the reserved period and the concurrency limit at two weeks each.
 - On 1 July 2025, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 20 to 21 weeks, the reserved period will increase to three weeks, and the concurrency limit will increase to four weeks.
 - On 1 July 2026, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 21 to 22 weeks, the reserved period will increase to four weeks, and the concurrency limit will be maintained at four weeks.

Supporting Research

- The WEET commissioned research from Professor Marian Baird AO and Associate Professor Elizabeth Hill to inform the stage one and stage two advice.
- Both stages of research were published on the PM&C website on 19 October 2023.

Stage One – Next Steps for Paid Parental Leave in Australia

- The professors provided the WEET with a report outlining evidence on PPL in Australia and overseas, exploring patterns of uptake by mothers and fathers/same sex partners.
- The report considered international best practice and potential effective approaches in the Australian context around both the balance of reserved and concurrent leave.
- The research proposed three models for consideration in 2023:

	Parent A	Parent B	Shared	Concurrent
Model 1: Equal Sharing and Flexible Care	2 weeks	2 weeks	16 weeks	10 weeks
Model 2: Incentivise Father/Partner Care	2 weeks	2 weeks	16 weeks	2 weeks
Model 3: Protection for Maternal and Child Health	4 weeks	2 weeks	14 weeks	4 weeks

Stage Two – Paid Parental Leave for Future Families: the Voices of Australian Parents

- The research focused on interviewing diverse family types on their experience with PPL and the ideal use of PPL to promote gender equality, women's workforce participation, and maternal wellbeing and child health.
- The final research report was provided to the WEET Chair on 28 April 2023.
- The research report proposed the below design as per an accelerated timetable and extended scheme:

Year of intro	Total PPL*	Parent A	Parent B	Shared unreserved	Sole father leave	Total concurrent leave
2023	20	2 weeks	2 weeks	16 weeks	0 weeks	2 weeks
2024	26	4 weeks	4 weeks	18 weeks	0 weeks	4 weeks
2026	52	12 weeks	12 weeks	28 weeks	8 weeks	8 weeks

* All PPL paid at minimum wage; ** PPL to be taken within the first two years of a child's life

OFW Role

- OFW provides policy advice on the gendered dimensions of PPL and their implications for women's workforce participation.
- OFW facilitated consultation between the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET) and stakeholders and academics, to support the WEET to provide advice on the optimal policy settings for PPL.
- When the initial PPL measure was brought forward in the 2022-23 October Budget, and final settings for the expansion of the scheme in MYEFO 2023-24, OFW provided advice to Government.
- OFW advised Government on the importance of incentivising a more equitable distribution of unpaid care. OFW also advised on maternal health considerations and the importance of retaining flexibility for parents.

WEET: Taskforce Engagements with women across Australia

- To inform their advice and recommendations, the WEET held nine engagement sessions to understand women's experiences with Australia's economic system to inform its final report and recommendations.
- The WEET heard from **62 people** including women with lived experience in rural, remote and regional areas, women in insecure work, women in trades, women working in social enterprise, women working in health, women from multicultural backgrounds, and economists.
- Some reflections from these engagements are outlined in the WEET's Budget priorities letter including:
 - feeling frustrated, disrespected and unsafe and that economic security is out of their reach.
 - wanting better lives and rights and to feel included and valued as contributors to society.
 - having a belief that their economic security will come from not relying on anyone else, being free from violence, and being able to participate in and have access to decent, well paid and secure work.

Logistics

- Sessions were organised and facilitated by the WEET.
 - OFW organised and provided remuneration to lived experience participants and participating members.
 - Participants were remunerated through the allocation for research costs.
 - Members were remunerated through the allocation for member sitting fees and travel.
- Women sharing their lived experiences were remunerated for their time with gift cards valued up to \$150.
 - This is in line with similar consultations which have been undertaken by BETA within PM&C.
- As of 31 August 2023, **45 gift cards** with a total value of **\$5,365** have been distributed to participants.
 - The purchase and distribution of gift cards has been recorded and approved under section 23(3) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

WEET: Costs and Contracts

- The WEET reported directly to the Minister for Women, and had access to a modest budget to fund research and analytical work.
 - OFW provided secretariat support to the WEET (managing appointments, taking meeting minutes, processing payments, publishing outcomes, engaging with the Special Adviser to schedule meetings, providing advice to Government on the Taskforce's operations and advice).

WEET executive support

- Meredith Turnbull was engaged as the Special Adviser to the Taskforce Chair in December 2022 to provide high-level executive support to the WEET Chair.
 - The Special Adviser was engaged to enable the WEET to streamline its work, deliver on its outputs and is accountable for the administrative functions of the WEET.
 - The Special Adviser worked closely with, but remained independent from OFW.
- Meredith Turnbull was selected by the WEET Chair in consultation with the Office for Women based on her experience in holding executive positions in a limited tender process.
 - Fees were negotiated with the supplier based on their expertise and engagement in similar roles, and the high level of support required to meet the needs of the WEET and the Chair.
- Meredith Turnbull was approached directly for their experience and ability to provide high level executive support, including 17 years' experience in the community, health and social sectors, along with holding executive positions on the boards of numerous small and larger social sector organisations.
- Meredith Turnbull fulfils the definition under the *Commonwealth Procurement Rules* for the Small Medium Enterprise exemption to enable her engagement above the \$80,000 (GST inclusive) limited tender threshold.
- Meredith Turnbull was engaged under three contracts with OFW.
 - The first contract (\$105,681.82 GST exclusive) supported early WEET conversations, policy development, and the engagement sessions with women across Australia.

- The second contract (\$49,545.45, GST exclusive) facilitated delivery of final WEET deliverables, including the second tranche of PPL advice.
- The third contract (\$27,500, GST exclusive) facilitated delivery of the final WEET report.
 - The third contract acknowledged the criticality of the continuation of the Special Adviser to the Taskforce Chair meeting her requirements to deliver the final report.
 - To not continue with the Special Adviser would have delayed delivery of the final report, which was critical to the continued development of the National Strategy.
- The Special Adviser:
 - Organised all, and facilitated most of WEET engagement sessions with women with lived experience and experts.
 - Worked closely with members to prepare for WEET meetings.
 - Collaborated closely with the Chair and members to draft the Budget priorities advice letter to the Minister.
 - Collaborated closely with the Chair and former members in the drafting of the final recommendations and report.

PPL contract details

- Professors Baird and Hill were engaged by the Office for Women through a limited tender process based off their unique expertise in gender, employment and care in Australia.
- As at 31 August 2023, the final contract value is \$70,000 (GST exclusive).
- They were engaged through two individual contracts, each valued at \$35,000 (GST exclusive).
 - The first phase report *Next Steps for Paid Parental Leave in Australia* was received on 18 November 2023.
 - The second phase report *Paid Parental Leave for Future Families: The Voices of Australian Parents* was received on 28 April 2023.

Final Report Design contract

- OFW engaged Mahlab Media Pty Ltd to copy write and design the final Taskforce deliverables.
- Mahlab Media was selected through a limited tender process due to their track record producing materials consistent with the Taskforce's final report that communicate complex gender-based and systems-change


policy work in an accessible and empowering manner for multiple audiences, all within short time frames.

- Mahlab Media was chosen by OFW with consultation with the WEET Chair, following internal procurement processes.
- As at 31 August 2023, the final contract value is \$72,020 (GST exclusive).
- Fees were negotiated based on the high level of writing and design needed to support the Taskforce's vision within the required timeframes to provide recommendations to Government.

Former member support

- Following the end of member's appointments on 30 April 2023 and at the request of the WEET Chair, PM&C offered to engage five former members under additional simple contracts.
 - These members were Ms Shelley Cable, Ms Samantha Connor, Professor Rae Cooper AO, Ms Terese Edwards and Ms Danielle Wood.
 - The five members were selected by the WEET Chair, not OFW.

s22(1)(a)(ii)



- The purpose of these agreements was to ensure former members were remunerated for their work to support the finalisation of the WEET advice to Government.
- The agreements ended on 30 June 2023.
- As at 31 August 2023, \$3,309 has been expended or committed under these contracts.

WEET: Appointments

Appointment Period

- The Chair was appointed by the Minister for Women on 30 August 2022 until 30 March 2023, an initial period of seven months.
- Members were appointed on 13 September 2022 until 13 March 2023, an initial period of six months.
- On 25 February 2023, the Minister invited the Chair to extend her term to 31 May 2023 (ten weeks) and members to extend their terms to 30 April 2023 (six weeks) to allow the WEET sufficient time to finalise its work.
 - All members except Ms Campbell accepted the extension. Her term ended on 13 March 2023.
 - Ms Picone resigned from the WEET in February 2023 due to pre-arranged personal leave.
- On 25 May 2023, the Minister for Women extended the Chair's appointment for a second time from 31 May 2023 until 31 July 2023 (eight weeks).
- On 12 August 2023, the Minister for Women reappointed the Chair until 21 August 2023 (nine days) to support final delivery of the Taskforce's recommendations.
- The appointment extensions made by the Minister for Women were made in accordance with the appointments process outlined in the Cabinet Handbook.
 - The Minister for Women wrote to the Prime Minister on each occasion to notify him of the appointment extensions.
- The WEET was time limited and options for a longer term advisory mechanism will be considered in the context of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.

Selection Process

- Members were selected based on their wide-ranging, diverse lived experience and background including First Nations women, women with disability, young women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, with representation from academia, business and civil advocacy.
 - OFW provided a list of 52 candidates to the Minister for Women's Office for consideration with a summary assessment of the candidates' skills, qualifications and attributes.

- Four members of the WEET were recommended by the Minister rather than the Office for Women.
- The Chair's appointment was agreed by the Prime Minister. The members' appointments were agreed by the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister.

Taskforce membership

- Sam Mostyn AO (Chair) – Chair of ANROWS; Chair of Australians Investing in Women
- Adrienne Picone – Chief Executive Officer of Tasmania's Council of Social Service [Ms Picone resigned from the WEET in February 2023 to take long service leave]
- Chiou See Anderson – President at National Council of Women of Australia; board member of the International Council of Women
- Danielle Wood – Chief Executive Officer of Grattan Institute; President of the Economic Society of Australia; co-founder and first Chair of the Women in Economics Network and incoming Productivity Commissioner
- Jennifer Westacott AO – Chancellor of Western Sydney University
- Jenny Macklin – Vice-Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Melbourne, School of Government
- Michele O'Neil – President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Rae Cooper AO – Director of the Gender Equality in Working Life Research Initiative, University of Sydney; President Elect of International Labor and Employment Relations Association (ILERA)
- Samantha Connor – Vice President of People with Disability Australia
- Shelley Cable – Nyoongar, Director and Advocate for Indigenous Economic Empowerment
- Shirleen Campbell – Co-ordinator of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group; NT Local Hero in 2020 [Ms Campbell chose not to extend her term due to competing priorities. Her term ended on 13 March 2023]
- Sizol Fuyana – Founder of Fuyana Support; 2022 Northern Territory Young Australian of the Year
- Terese Edwards – Executive Director of the National Council of Single Mothers and their Children

WEET: Budget Advice

- On 24 March 2023, the WEET provided advice on their key priorities for the 2023-24 Budget to Government.
- On 18 April 2023, this advice was published on the PM&C website.

Reinstate the Parenting Payment (Single) for women with children over eight years old

- The Government is investing **\$1.9 billion over five years from 2023-24** to expand the eligibility for Parenting Payment (Single) to single parents with a youngest dependent child aged under 14 years of age (increased from under eight).

OFW Role

- OFW provided advice as it was considered in the Budget context.

If asked: why was the eligible age for Parenting Payment (Single) not lifted to 16 in line with the recommendations of the WEET?

- The care needs of a child are usually quite different by the time they are 14. At 14, children have typically settled into high school and need less parental supervision, enabling parents to enter paid work or increase their hours.
- Connection with the workforce is the best way to improve women's economic security over the long-term.
- As such, the Government is providing additional support to single parents while maintaining mutual obligation requirements.

Refer further questions to the Department of Social Services.

Abolish the ParentsNext program

- The Government will abolish and introduce a new replacement program for ParentsNext from 1 July 2024.
- Abolishing ParentsNext and replacing it with a new program is consistent with strong calls from parents, advocates and experts including the:
 - Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee;
 - interim report of the House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services; and
 - final report of the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care.

- The new voluntary program is being designed and developed in consultation with parents and community stakeholders.
- As at 31 August 2023, around 95.9 per cent of participants are women, 21.3 per cent are First Nations, and 77.3 per cent are single parents.

OFW Role

- OFW engaged closely with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on the approach to ParentsNext and is working closely on the design of a replacement program.
 - OFW seconded one OFW policy staff member to DEWR to assist with the process from 22 May to 27 September 2023.

Refer further questions to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Increase the rate of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

- The Government is providing **\$2.7 billion over five years from 2023-24** (and \$0.7 billion per year ongoing) to increase the maximum payment rate by 15 per cent.
- This is on top of the roughly \$5.1 billion the Government spends on Rent Assistance each year.

OFW Role

- OFW provided advice on the proposal's potential impact on women as it was considered in the Budget context.

Refer further questions to the Department of Social Services.

Invest in an interim pay-rise for all early childhood educators and aged care workers

- The Government has committed **\$11.3 billion over five years from 2022-23** to fund a 15 per cent increase to minimum wages for many aged care workers from 1 July 2023, including registered nurses, enrolled nurses, assistants in nursing, personal care workers, home care workers, recreational activity officers, and head chefs and cooks.
- The Government is also investing **\$72.4 million over five years from 2022-23** to provide professional development opportunities for ECEC workers to improve retention in the sector.

OFW Role

- OFW was consulted on the proposal to build capacity and strengthen supply of early childhood education and care (ECEC) workers, to strengthen the gender lens on policy.

If asked: why hasn't the Government invested in a pay rise for Early Childhood Educators and Carers?

- The Government passed the Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation last year to introduce a pathway for ECEC workers to obtain higher wages and make it easier for under-valued, female-dominated workforces to seek equal remuneration orders.
 - On 6 June 2023, the Fair Work Commission (FWC) received an application to commence multi-employer bargaining for a 25 per cent wage increase, covering 66 ECEC employers.
 - In hearings on 16 and 17 August, the FWC considered whether to authorise the supported bargaining case. A determination is yet to be made.
- The Government also tasked the Productivity Commission to undertake a comprehensive inquiry into Australia's ECEC system with the report due in 2024 and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is conducting an inquiry into the childcare services market.
- The Government is also building the ECEC workforce with new university places and fee-free TAFE; working with states and territories to deliver a National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy; and developing the Early Years Strategy.

Refer further questions on ECEC workforce to Department of Education.

Raise the base rate of income support (Jobseeker and working age payments)

- The Government is providing **\$4.9 billion over five years from 2022-23** and **\$1.3 billion per year** ongoing to **increase support** for around 1.1 million people receiving working age payments.
- The Government is also extending the eligibility for the existing higher rate of JobSeeker Payment for single Australians aged 55 and over, who are on the payment for nine or more continuous months (previously aged over 60).
- Women are just over half (53 per cent) of all those who will receive a payment increase, and over 56 per cent of JobSeeker recipients aged over 55.

OFW Role

- OFW provided advice as it was considered in the Budget context.

Refer further questions to the Department of Social Services.

Pay superannuation on Paid Parental Leave

- The changes to the Paid Parental Leave Scheme which came into effect from 1 July 2023 represent the largest single enhancement to strengthen and expand the scheme since its introduction in 2011.
 - The Government has stated an intention to pay superannuation on Paid Parental Leave, when the Budget allows.

OFW Role

- OFW provided advice on the reforms through the PM&C advice process.

Refer further questions to the Department of Social Services.

Abolish the Child Care Activity Test

- A report from Impact Economics and Policy (2023) estimates that the CCS activity test is preventing 126,000 children from low-income households from accessing ECEC and increasing the search costs for women to return to the workforce.
- The report posits that abolishing the activity test would cost the Government \$1.3 billion in 2023-24, but could increase GDP by \$4.5 billion per year.

If asked: why didn't the Government abolish the Childcare Subsidy Activity Test?

- The Government has launched a comprehensive Productivity Commission inquiry into the ECEC sector, which will consider options for universal, affordable child care.
- The Government has asked the Productivity Commission to consider activity requirements as part of that inquiry.

OFW Role

- OFW was consulted on ECEC measures through the PM&C advice process.

Refer further questions to the Department of Education.

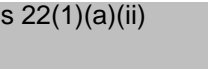
Overlap with the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee

- On April 18 2023, the Government released the interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee's (EIAC) first report.
 - The draft report was delivered on 6 March 2023.
- The EIAC also recommended increasing CRA, abolishing the Child Care Subsidy Activity Test, abolishing ParentsNext, and increasing JobSeeker and related working age payments.
- Two WEET members sat on the EIAC – the Hon Jenny Macklin (Chair of the EIAC) and Ms Jennifer Westacott AO.
- The two advisory groups did not meet.

Refer further questions to the Department of Social Services and the Department of the Treasury.

Attachments

- Attachment A: WEET advice for 2023-24 Budget

Date: 19 Oct 2023
Cleared by (SES): Clancie Hall
Branch/Section: Gender Equality Strategy
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: 
Consultation: Nil

OCTOBER 2023 SENATE ESTIMATES

FAS LEADERSHIP TEAM BRIEF: WOMENS ECONOMIC EQUALITY TASKFORCE KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

ADVICE AND DELIVERABLES	EXPENDITURE	TIMELINE																																																																																																																																																																							
<p>Priority contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Providing a WEET final report with its recommendations to achieve women’s economic equality to the Minister for Women (1 September 2023).Providing advice on key priorities for the 2023-24 Budget (24 March 2023).Informing the development of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality through involvement in consultations and consideration of early evidence.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Informed the first phase consultation inviteesInvolved in consultationsConsidered early evidence gatheredProviding strategic advice on key issues arising from the Jobs and Skills Summit, including via engaging with Treasury on the development of the Employment White PaperProviding advice on the modernisation of the Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme.<ul style="list-style-type: none">16 November 2022: Stage one advice provided on <i>only</i> the first tranche of <i>Paid Parental Leave Act 2010</i> amendments. Changes to commence from 1 July 2023.9 June 2023: Stage two advice provided on reserved leave and concurrency for second tranche amendments to the legislation, to commence from 1 July 2024.Engaging with agencies across the APS to influence outcomes that benefit women’s economic equality.Members of the Taskforce met with the Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services in relation to ParentsNext and with the OECD delegation for the Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting Review in Australia. <p>WEET Report recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Report includes seven recommendations with a total of 47 sub-recommendations for ‘immediate’ and ‘long-term’ action.Recommendations cover themes such as care, work, education and skills, tax and transfers and the role of Government. <p>2023-24 Budget advice letter for urgent and targeted actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reinstate Parenting Payment (Single) for women with children over eight years-oldAbolish ParentsNextAbolish the Childcare Subsidy Activity TestPayment of Superannuation for primary carers while they are on PPLIncrease the rate of Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA)Invest in an interim wage increase for all early childhood educators and aged care workers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">The WEET also recommended raising the base rate of income support. <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on workplace relations reformsDepartment of Social Services on PPLTreasury on the Employment White PaperDepartment of Education on early childhood education and carePM&C Behavioural Economics Team of Australia on women’s labour force participation and PPL form designOECD delegation on gender responsive budgetingSelect Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services on ParentsNextPM&C Care and Support Economy Taskforce on the National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy62 diverse women across Australia with lived experience.<ul style="list-style-type: none">30 April 2023 – \$5,365 has been spent on 45 gift cards for participants <p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Taskforce met ten times during its term.Two meetings were attended by the Minister for Women – 21 September 2022 and 1 March 2023.Meeting outcomes are published on the PM&C website. <p>Member appointments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Eleven Taskforce members served a seven month term, while the Chair served an 11 month term.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Members were appointed initially for six months (appointed on 13 September 2022), and the Taskforce Chair seven months (appointed on 30 August 2022).The Minister invited members to extend their terms on 25 February 2023, to 30 April 2023 (and 31 May 2023 for the Taskforce Chair, which was later extended to 31 July 2023).The Taskforce Chair was reappointed on 12 August 2023 to 21 August 2023.	<p>Expenditure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The total cost of the Taskforce was \$486,581 (GST exclusive). <p>Member remuneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Members were paid a daily rate of up to \$1,500 (GST exclusive) and were remunerated for their time, travel and incidental expenses.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Remuneration was consistent with the <i>Remuneration Tribunal Amendment Determination (No. 10) 2022</i>.Three former members assisted to finalise the Taskforce advice beyond their terms and were paid a total of \$3,309 (GST exclusive) for this work. <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Expense Summary (as at 31 August 2023)</th><th rowspan="2">Expenditure (\$)</th><th rowspan="2">Remaining Commitments (\$)</th><th colspan="3">Total Expenditure and Commitments (\$)</th></tr><tr><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>Total</th></tr><tr><td>Taskforce member fees and travel costs</td><td>157,075.86*</td><td>1,124.50</td><td>167,203.10</td><td>-9,002.74</td><td>158,200.36</td></tr><tr><td>Travel</td><td>31,238.46</td><td>-</td><td>31,356.04</td><td>-117.58</td><td>31,238.46</td></tr><tr><td>Sitting Fees</td><td>125,714.50</td><td>1,124.50</td><td>135,724.16</td><td>-8,885.16</td><td>126,839.00</td></tr><tr><td>Catering</td><td>122.90</td><td>-</td><td>122.90</td><td>-</td><td>122.90</td></tr><tr><td>Taskforce commissioned research and advice</td><td>300,881.13</td><td>27,500.00</td><td>300,881.13</td><td>27,500.00</td><td>328,381.13</td></tr><tr><td>Engagements</td><td>8,994.31</td><td>-</td><td>8,994.31</td><td>-</td><td>8,994.31</td></tr><tr><td>PPL Research</td><td>70,000.00</td><td>-</td><td>70,000.00</td><td>-</td><td>70,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Special Adviser to Taskforce Chair</td><td>149,866.82</td><td>27,500.00</td><td>149,866.82</td><td>27,500.00</td><td>177,366.82</td></tr><tr><td>Final Report Design & Copywriting</td><td>72,020.00</td><td>-</td><td>72,020.00</td><td>-</td><td>72,020.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>457,956.99</td><td>28,624.50</td><td>468,084.23</td><td>18,497.26</td><td>486,581.49</td></tr></table> <p>CONTRACTS</p> <p>Professor Marian Baird (CN3931732) and Associate Professor Elizabeth Hill (CN3931733): PPL Research</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Contract – 21 November 2022 to 9 June 2023</th></tr><tr><td>Stage one research</td><td>\$20,000 (GST exclusive)</td></tr><tr><td>Stage two research</td><td>\$50,000 (GST exclusive)</td></tr><tr><td>Total contract value</td><td>\$70,000 (GST exclusive)</td></tr></table> <p><i>All values account for both contracts. Both are of equal value.</i></p> <p>Meredith Turnbull: Special Adviser to the Taskforce Chair</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Contract One (CN3936348) – 19 December 2022 to 29 March 2023</th></tr><tr><td>Total value contract one</td><td>\$105,682 (GST exclusive)</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Contract Two (CN3962438) – 18 April 2023 to 31 July 2023</th></tr><tr><td>Total value contract two</td><td>\$49,545 (GST exclusive)</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Contract Three (CN3996497) – 16 August 2023 to 28 August 2023</th></tr><tr><td>Total value contract three</td><td>\$27,500 (GST exclusive)</td></tr><tr><td>Total value of Special Adviser Engagement</td><td>\$182,727 (GST exclusive)*</td></tr></table> <p><i>* Contract one value includes up to \$9,000 allowance for travel which was not fully claimed. This accounts for the difference in values from the value in Expense Summary table (above) that notes the total value of \$177,366.82.</i></p> <p>Mahlab Media: Final report</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Contract – 27 April 2023 to 20 June 2023</th></tr><tr><td>Total contract value</td><td>\$72,020 (GST exclusive)</td></tr></table>	Expense Summary (as at 31 August 2023)	Expenditure (\$)	Remaining Commitments (\$)	Total Expenditure and Commitments (\$)			2022-23	2023-24	Total	Taskforce member fees and travel costs	157,075.86*	1,124.50	167,203.10	-9,002.74	158,200.36	Travel	31,238.46	-	31,356.04	-117.58	31,238.46	Sitting Fees	125,714.50	1,124.50	135,724.16	-8,885.16	126,839.00	Catering	122.90	-	122.90	-	122.90	Taskforce commissioned research and advice	300,881.13	27,500.00	300,881.13	27,500.00	328,381.13	Engagements	8,994.31	-	8,994.31	-	8,994.31	PPL Research	70,000.00	-	70,000.00	-	70,000.00	Special Adviser to Taskforce Chair	149,866.82	27,500.00	149,866.82	27,500.00	177,366.82	Final 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Recommendation 1

The Australian Government must provide leadership and accountability for driving economic equality outcomes and embed gender equity into its decision making, budgeting and policy design, implementation, and evaluation mechanisms.

Recommendation		Responsible portfolio
1.1	The Prime Minister and the Minister for Women, to report annually to the Australian Parliament on progress and effectiveness of Government action to achieve economic equality and progress for women, and to provide action plans for areas requiring further strengthening or improvement. The Minister for Women to provide additional reporting on progress on priorities set out in the National Gender Equality Strategy.	PM&C – OFW Treasury
1.2	In line with OECD best practice, legislate to integrate gender impact assessment and gender responsive processes into policy design, implementation, and evaluation; legislative processes; and budgeting to ensure that the unique challenges faced by women, and diverse groups of women, are addressed and that gender equality is foregrounded in the work and investments of government. This will require an intersectional approach. Government should improve, not worsen, the lives of women and this imperative should underpin the work of central and service delivery agencies (including in important areas like employment services and social services).	PM&C - OFW
1.3	Enable the Office for Women to align its work with leading international practice as a centre of expertise on gender equality in government. This Office must be appropriately funded to expand its capacity to design and inform policy and to drive change in policy practice across the APS. The Office for Women must have the right skills, expertise, and leadership, and be appropriately connected with the leadership of the broader APS to perform its functions with impact.	PM&C - OFW
1.4	Establish and resource an independent national women's economic equality advisory body to oversee the recommendations in this report, work collaboratively with other gender equality advisory bodies (such as in Health, Violence prevention), and to provide independent advice to government on policy priorities and design to progress women's economic equality over a 10-year horizon.	PM&C - OFW
1.5	Improve the use of currently available data, collect new data where needed, and build the right tools to present an accurate and nuanced understanding of the dimensions of gendered economic inequality in Australia and the needs of women experiencing disadvantage. This includes setting an expectation of evidence-based policy development and investing in the data capability of the APS to build, collect and use gender disaggregated data sets.	PM&C - OFW
1.6	Invest in sustained gender-equality capability improvement initiatives within the APS. These initiatives should focus on developing comprehensive and tailored training programs on gender analysis of policy design, implementation and assessment catering to the specific needs and remit of different agencies and their policy end-users.	PM&C - OFW
1.7	Model leading practice in gender equitable and diverse employment in the APS by taking action to improve the gender pay gap, address occupational and portfolio-based gender segregation, achieve, and maintain gender balance and broader diversity in the ranks of the Senior Executive Service, provide and encourage access to high quality, secure, flexible work, and increase men's uptake of flexible work and care-focused leaves (like PPL and carers leaves).	PM&C – OFW, APS Reform Office and APSC
1.8	Establish an independent inquiry into the social security system and broader legislative frameworks (including the family law system) using a gender impact assessment framework to understand where systems, rules, and practices reduce women's safety and enable post-separation violence and coercive control, this includes existing practices that do not entirely or only partially fulfil their stated aim.	Social Services Attorney-General's

Key

Immediate Action

Long-term Action



Recommendation 2

The Australian Government must invest in policies and programs that recognise the economic importance and value of care work in Australia and help families to better share caring responsibilities.

Recommendation		Responsible portfolio	Key
2.1	Legislate to establish and invest in universal, high-quality, and affordable early childhood education and care, that meets the needs of modern families, is culturally appropriate and delivered by highly skilled, securely employed, and well-paid staff.	Education	Immediate Action
2.2	Abolish the Child Care Subsidy Activity Test, as an immediate first step towards universal access to early education for Australian children.	Education	
2.3	Support applications in the Fair Work jurisdiction that seek to raise the wages and improve the job quality of early childhood educators. As a step to remedying historical undervaluation of educators' work, ensure that the outcomes of these cases are fully funded.	Employment and Workplace Relations Education	
2.4	Strengthen rights and protections for working parents and carers and ensuring workers can access parental leave entitlements and high quality, flexible work arrangements, and they are not discriminated against when seeking to use those entitlements.	Employment and Workplace Relations	Long-term Action
2.5	Fully implement the National Care and Support Economy Strategy and develop policies that improve the wages, secure and safe work, and recognition of care workers. This includes ensuring fair remuneration, access to professional development opportunities, and mechanisms for career progression. Design a strategy to address gender imbalance across the full spectrum of the care sector.	PM&C	
2.6	Legislate the payment of superannuation on all forms of paid parental leave (PPL).	Social Services Treasury	
2.7	Extend the Paid Parental Leave scheme by phasing the entitlement up to 52 weeks and boost the quantum of payments to reach a replacement wage and ensure the scheme incentivises men's use of leave.	Social Services	
2.8	Elevate the status of care work and attract a diverse and skilled workforce by valuing and adequately compensating care workers, including by supporting relevant Fair Work Commission cases and committing to fund their outcomes.	PM&C	



Recommendation 3

The Australian Government must utilise its legislative, regulatory, and spending powers to ensure all Australian workplaces create safe, secure, flexible, equitable work opportunities that support women's participation.

Recommendation		Responsible portfolio	Key
3.1	Implement all the Respect@Work and Set the Standard Report recommendations and monitor their impact in proactively facilitating safe workplaces for Australian women.	Attorney-General's PM&C	Immediate Action
3.2	Build the supply of good, secure jobs for women and address insecure work by providing stronger protections for workers employed in insecure work.	Employment and Workplace Relations	
3.3	Boost the availability of high-quality flexible working (rather than precarious forms); strengthen rights of employees to flexible work and family-friendly working arrangements; introduce workplace protections for reproductive health, e.g., the ability to request flexible working arrangements, implement reasonable adjustments and take new forms of leave.	Employment and Workplace Relations	
3.4	Harmonise anti-discrimination and industrial legislation to include positive, enforceable legal duties on employers to eliminate discrimination and harassment and advance gender equality, including a positive duty on employers to reasonably accommodate the needs of workers who are pregnant and/or have family responsibilities.	Attorney-General's Employment and Workplace Relations	
3.5	Ensure that minimum and award wages setting processes take into account what would be considered an appropriate living wage for employees.	Employment and Workplace Relations	Long-term Action
3.6	Encourage employers to set gender equality targets and strengthen the Workplace Gender Equality Agency reporting obligations to include meaningful benchmarks against which to measure progress towards gender equality year on year.	PM&C – OFW and WGEA	
3.7	Strengthen the capacity of women to access representation from appropriate organisations and services when they wish to take action in discrimination and industrial jurisdictions. This means ensuring that important institutions like the Office of the Sex Discrimination Commission and the specialist panels in the Fair Work Commission are appropriately resourced to meet demand.	Employment and Workplace Relations Attorney-General's	
3.8	Ensure that government funding of sectors and services facilitates the availability of high-quality and secure work in these areas. This will mean that funding is adequate to support living wages, decent work and the capacity to progress and develop in careers, e.g., in the ECEC, aged care and disability support sectors.	PM&C	



Recommendation 4

The Australian Government must provide women in Australia lifelong accessible, flexible, and affordable education and skill building and removes existing disincentives and inequities that perpetuate industry and occupational segregation and sustained pay and wealth gaps.

	Recommendation	Responsible portfolio	Key
4.1	Work with industry, unions and other stakeholders, including employer associations, professional associations, and advocacy groups, to establish or scale programs that support women to enter and flourish in traditionally male-dominated sectors of employment. Investigate mechanisms to generate better impact from current government investments aimed at boosting participation in these sectors including strategically aligning government programmes, evaluating effectiveness of investments, and experimenting with and evaluating new approaches.	Industry, Science and Resources Employment and Workplace Relations Infrastructure, transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts Climate Change, Energy Efficiency, and Water PM&C – OFW NIAA	Immediate Action
4.2	Reimagine the recently abolished ParentsNext program, including and co-designing new offerings in conjunction with single mothers, the predominant policy target, focusing on maximising support to single mothers and capacity building of existing community services.	Employment and Workplace Relations	
4.3	Address work respect, health and safety barriers for women in male dominated industries such as gendered violence, lack of access to safe, secure, and dedicated facilities for women (such as toilets and changing rooms); and lack of appropriate, suitable personal protective equipment, tools and clothing.	Attorney-General's Industry, Science and Resources	
4.4	Invest in education from early childhood, schools, and tertiary education to deliver opportunities for girls and women that will enable them to participate in every aspect of economic, social, and cultural life.	Education	
4.5	Ensure that teaching and nursing students can complete their studies without financial penalty by requiring that mandatory placements are paid.	Education Health and Aged Care	
4.6	Develop a national strategy and invest in action to close the First Nations employment gap (as per Closing the Gap Targets 7 and 8) with a focus on meaningful, skilled, well-paid employment for First Nations women, and increase funding in Indigenous Employment Programs run by Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations	PM&C - First Nations NIAA	
4.7	Trial a program with a cohort of older Australian women returning to the workforce and looking to upskill. As part of the trial, create a pathway for women to engage with a wide range of courses from pre-approved providers.	Employment and Workplace Relations	Long-term Action



Recommendation 5

The Australian Government must undertake a long-term targeted and deliberate program of investment to ensure women are leading and building the economy in equal measure to men.

	Recommendation	Responsible portfolio	Key
5.1	Leverage government's purchasing power to incentivise and support businesses committed to, and demonstrating positive action to achieve, inclusive and equitable employment practice. This should prioritise awarding contracts to businesses that deliver positive action in areas including pay equity, addressing gender segregation and segmentation, building respectful workplace cultures and leveraging workplace diversity and inclusion. Additionally, ensure that government funding of services and sectors (such as through the provision of care services) lifts the quality of jobs rather than entrenches inequalities. Incorporate these principles, priorities, and effective compliance into the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.	PM&C - OFW Finance	
5.2	Continue to invest in programs to increase the proportion of women in Parliament, government boards and in community leadership roles.	PM&C – OFW ASP Reform Office	Immediate Action
5.3	Develop programs that encourage women's equal participation and flourishing careers in emerging industries such as clean energy, new technologies, climate-positive industries, digital, cyber-security and Artificial Intelligence development. Additionally, increase women's access to seed funding and capital for entrepreneurial initiatives.	Department of Industry, Science and Resources Employment and Workplace Relations Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water Home Affairs PM&C NIAA	Long-term Action
5.4	Develop an inclusive procurement policy that prioritises awarding contracts to businesses that demonstrate positive action in gender equality pay equity, diversity, and inclusion, such as setting targets for employment of women employed/engaged through government issued contracts, particularly for services in male-dominated industries.	PM&C – OFW Finance	
5.5	Establish a supplier diversity program to actively seek out and support businesses owned by women, minorities, and other underrepresented groups to build their capability and capacity to bid competitively for government procurement and contracts.	PM&C – OFW Finance	



Recommendation 6

The Government must ensure that women have financial security across their lives and are increasingly building lifetime wealth and economic equality.

	Recommendation	Responsible portfolio	Key
6.1	Co-design a comprehensive financial support program for victim survivors of domestic and family violence that enables them to leave violence, re-establish safe and stable housing and focus on recovery without incurring financial losses. This new program should build on the trial "Escaping Violence Payment" program.	Social Services	Immediate Action
6.2	Ensure that financial literacy programs are part of the curriculum for all high school students to enable young people to understand the basic concepts of managing personal finances, building personal wealth and the life states and choices that can have a significant impact on economic security.	Education Treasury	
6.3	Review the taxation and transfer systems with a gender lens to identify negative gender bias and examine options to address the high Effective Marginal Tax Rates (EMTRs) experienced by women.	Treasury Social Services	
6.4	Require banks and financial services to continue to develop financial products and services specifically for the needs of women across their life course, that are free or very low cost. This includes for women escaping domestic and family violence, buying a home, experiencing divorce, and/or retirement planning. Introduce regulation and/or initiatives to ensure the needs of women are protected using other financial services, including those that have harsh penalties and consequences such as Buy Now Pay Later schemes.	Treasury Social Services Attorney-General's	Long-term Action
6.5	Remove the Child Support Maintenance Income Test (MIT) from the Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTBA) calculation, to establish certainty of FTBA payments for financially vulnerable families and prevent child support to be used as a tool of financial abuse.	Social Services	
6.6	Reduce the financial penalty from caring responsibilities, such as carers' tax offsets upon re-entering paid work and pausing indexation on HECS-HELP debts for periods of time away from paid work.	Treasury Social Services Education	



Recommendation 7

The Australian Government must invest in programs to address community attitudes and bias that prevent women's full economic participation across a lifetime.

Recommendation		Responsible portfolio	Key
7.1	Implement and resource the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality- ensuring community attitudes and bias are addressed, through evidence-based practice, at both a whole of population and community, and industry level. Build a comprehensive research agenda to inform normative change and measure progress.	PM&C - OFW	Immediate Action
7.2	Work with the e-Safety Commissioner to design initiatives to address how online experiences shape attitudes towards gender equality and support women and men's equal place in society, with a particular focus on young people's experiences online.	PM&C - OFW Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	
7.3	Demonstrate international leadership through participation in regional and multilateral fora to counter anti-gender equality sentiment globally and use Australia's position to advocate for the safety, health and economic outcomes of women and girls globally.	PM&C - OFW Foreign Affairs and Trade	Long-term Action
7.4	Resource critical women's advocacy work such as the National Women's Alliances or like models, to provide a consultative mechanism to elevate the voices of diverse women and girls around the country and provide advice on policy priorities to improve economic equality and life outcomes, including by working with the National Women's Economic Equality Advisory Body (recommendation 1.5).	PM&C - OFW	
7.5	The proposed (recommendation 1.5) National Women's Economic Equality Advisory body to meet annually with other women's advisory committees and councils such as those appointed to oversee the National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030 and the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32.	PM&C - OFW	

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 Review Implementation

Subject/Issue

The Government is implementing all recommendations of the Workplace Gender Equality Act (Act) 2012 Review (Review).

OFW Role

- The Office for Women (OFW) is working in collaboration with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) to implement the remaining legislative recommendations of the Review. These include:
 - Recommendation 3.1a: add a new minimum standard to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to achieve and report to WGEA on measurable genuine targets against three of the six gender equality indicators.
 - Recommendation 6: Research how to collect more diversity data in addition to gender data to enable voluntary reporting, including on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability.
 - Recommendation 7.2: In line with the ABS 2020 Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables, enable WGEA to collect data on non-binary people.
 - Recommendation 7.3b: The Act may need amending to include partnerships and partners in the WGEA data set more comprehensively.
- Remaining non-legislative recommendations
 - Recommendation 8: Strengthen compliance and enforcement through Commonwealth grants and procurement eligibility, supported by a review of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles.
 - Recommendation 1.1: Identify how to improve the quality of data reported to WGEA and reduce the regulatory burden for employers through stakeholder consultation and research overseen by the Gender Data Steering Group (GDSG).

Key Points

Legislative Recommendations

- From May to July this year, WGEA consulted with stakeholders on how best to implement the remaining Review recommendations.
 - Stakeholders included academics, private and public sector employers, unions, industry peak bodies, partnerships, organisations representing First Nations, disability, cultural and linguistic diversity and LGBTIQ+ communities, experts in gender, and people with lived experience.
- Based on WGEA's consultation reports and implementation advice, OFW will provide advice to Government in late 2023 on the approach and timing of further legislative amendments.
 - This legislation will be brought forward as soon as possible, consistent with Government's legislative priorities.

Non-Legislative Recommendations

Recommendation 8

- OFW are undertaking a review of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles (Principles) associated with the Act. The review will consider:
 - How the Australian Government applies the Principles in practice.
 - Opportunities to strengthen the Principles as a means to encourage employers to report to WGEA.
 - How the Australian Government's approach to procurement spending contributes to gender equality outcomes.
- The Office for Women conducted consultation from 23 August 2023 to 19 September 2023, and sought submissions from employers with experience in tendering for Australian Government contracts, procuring Commonwealth Departments, or with an interest in procurement as an avenue to advance gender equality in Australia.
- Consultation will inform any changes to the Principles.

Recommendation 1.1

- OFW has been coordinating with the ABS, ATO and WGEA to identify options to implement this recommendation.
 - This has involved consultation and engagement with stakeholders across Government such as the Department of Finance, the Office of the National Data Commissioner and the Treasury to

understand the risks and limitations associated with the options identified.

- It is anticipated that the outcome of this consultation and engagement, including recommended next steps, will be presented to the GDSG for their consideration at a future meeting.

State & Territory Public Sector Reporting

- On 10 December 2021, National Cabinet announced its in-principle agreement from all States and Territories to provide public sector workforce data to WGEA.
 - This commitment intends to align the reporting requirements of the state and territory public sectors with the Commonwealth Public Sector to enable greater data collection by WGEA.
 - This commitment is being monitored through the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (Council).
- State senior officials have agreed to participate in the Reporting Gender Data Group (Data Group) established by WGEA to deliver this commitment.
 - The Data Group will develop a work plan to progress the National Cabinet commitment and provide updates to the Council.

Background

First Tranche of Legislation

- The Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023 received Royal Assent on 11 April 2023.
- The Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023 and the Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023 (together, the Instruments) have been in force since 6 February 2023.
- The first tranche gives effect to the following recommendations:
 - Recommendation 2: Publishing organisation gender pay gaps to accelerate action to close them.
 - Recommendation 3.1b: strengthen the existing minimum standards to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to have policies or strategies that cover all six gender equality indicators.
 - Recommendation 3.1c: Rename the minimum standards to be 'gender equality standards'
 - Recommendation 3.2: Strengthen accountability of relevant employers to take action to improve gender equality in workplaces.
 - Recommendation 4: reduce the regulatory burden on employers.
 - Recommendation 5: Support Respect@Work implementation to prevent and address workplace sex-based harassment and discrimination
 - Recommendation 7.1: refine the gender equality indicators.
 - Recommendation 9.2: amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act to change the title of the 'Director of WGEA' to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Gender Data Steering Group

- OFW established the GDSG (fulfilling Recommendation 1.2) in October 2022.
 - The group is co-chaired by Padma Raman, PM&C Office for Women Executive Director, and Brenton Goldsworthy, ABS Deputy Statistician.

- This group has been convened to maximise the impact of the government's major data holdings as an evidence-base for gender equality policy and the development of a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.
- The group have met five times since its establishment, on 12 October 2022, 16 November 2022, 16 March 2023, 6 July 2023 and 21 September 2023.
- During these meetings, the group discussed its role in improving the impact of the Australian Government's collection and use of gender data, findings from a stocktake of major Government data holdings, opportunities to address gender data gaps, and uplift gender data capability.

Public Sector Reporting

- The Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation (Respect@Work) Act 2022 reached assent on 12 December 2022 and amended the Act to require federal public sector organisations to report to WGEA.
 - This implements recommendation 43(a) of Respect@Work for the Commonwealth public sector.
 - From 1 January 2023, the Commonwealth Public Sector began mandatory reporting to WGEA.
 - This annual mandatory public sector reporting will be published for the first time in 2024. The Commonwealth Public Sector employer level gender pay gaps will be published late 2024 or early 2025 (**information yet to be released**).
- Ahead of mandatory reporting WGEA invited relevant Commonwealth entities and companies to voluntarily report their gender equality data.
 - 52 (of a possible 112) participated in this program. Participants included 40 agencies who employ staff under the Public Service Act (APS agencies) and 12 non-APS agencies.
 - The data included in the 2022 Public Sector Gender Equality Snapshot reflects these voluntary reporting Commonwealth public sector employers. The snapshot is available the WGEA website.
 - The total remuneration gender pay gap for the Commonwealth employers that voluntarily reported to WGEA is 11.6 per cent.

Key Facts and Figures

- The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of women and men in the workforce. This is most commonly measured using full-time earnings.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) full-time gender pay gap has dropped from 13.3 per cent in November 2022 to 13 per cent in May 2023, the lowest level on record.
 - This is equivalent to a difference of \$252.30 a week.
 - The national gender pay gap is based on ABS full time average weekly ordinary earnings data. It is based on weekly base salaries for all full-time employees in the private and public sectors. It excludes part-time and casual employees, as well as any additional remuneration, including overtime, bonuses, pay that is salary sacrificed and superannuation.
- The WGEA gender pay gap is 22.8 per cent. This is the same as the previous year of reporting.
 - This is equivalent to a difference of \$26.6K a year.
 - WGEA's gender pay gap is based on data provided by Australian private sector employers with 100 or more employees in WGEA's annual employer census.
 - It includes total remuneration, including superannuation, bonuses and other additional payments of full-time, part-time and casual employees. The pay of part-time and casual employees is converted into standardised full time equivalent earnings.
- Differences in coverage and scope between the ABS and WGEA's employer survey lead to differences in their gender pay gap figures.

Date:	5 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Shelby Schofield
Branch/Section:	Women's Economic Policy/Office for Women
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	WGEA, Evidence

Attachment A: Status of recommendations of the Review of the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012

Last updated: 20 September 2023

Recommendation 1 – Make it easier for employers to report to WGEA and improve collection and sharing of gender data		
<p>1.1 Improve the quality of data reported to WGEA, and reduce the regulatory burden for employers, by tasking a new Gender Data Steering Group (Recommendation 1.2) to drive and oversee research and stakeholder consultation (including with both human resources and payroll Digital Service Providers) to identify how to:</p> <p>a. enable WGEA to use data employers have already provided to government and</p>	<p>Gender Data Working Group has been established to support the work of the Gender Data Steering Group (GDSG) and fulfil Recommendation 1.1a and b.</p> <p>The Co-Chairs of the GDSG will next provide an update to the Deputy Secretaries Data Group (DSDG) on its work during the 22 November meeting of the DSDG.</p>	In Progress (not legislative)
<p>b. invest in a way to assist employers to extract other data from their own employer systems using a digital solution where possible.</p>		
1.2 Improve the sharing of gender data among WGEA, other departments and agencies by establishing a Gender Data Steering Group under the Deputy Secretary Data Group.	Gender Data Steering Group has been established (co-chaired by OFW and Australian Bureau of Statistics).	Completed
Recommendation 2 – Publish organisation gender pay gaps to accelerate action to close them		
2.1 Amend the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012</i> to allow WGEA to publish gender pay gap information at an employer level as an overall figure and by quartile to encourage change within organisations. Individual employee pay information is not to be published. Conduct further stakeholder consultation to identify the best way to implement this recommendation and conduct a regulatory impact assessment ahead of implementation.	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>WGEA will publish private sector gender pay gaps for the first time in the first quarter of 2024.</p>	Completed

Recommendation 3 – Bridge the ‘action gap’ with new gender equality standards		
<p>3.1 Bridge the ‘action gap’ to strengthen the existing minimum standards by amending the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Minimum Standards) Instrument 2014</i> to:</p> <p>a. add a new minimum standard to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to commit to, achieve and report to WGEA on measurable genuine targets to improve gender equality in their workplace against three of the six gender equality indicators</p>	<p>Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.</p>	In Progress (Tranche 2)
<p>b. strengthen the existing minimum standards to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to have policies or strategies that cover all six gender equality indicators (not just one policy or strategy for one gender equality indicator in the current minimum standards), and</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023.</p> <p>Employers with 500 or more employees will be required to report the existence of their policies or strategies in their 2023-24 Gender Equality Reporting.</p>	Completed
<p>c. rename the minimum standards to be ‘gender equality standards.’</p>	<p>Partially implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023. Further implementation required through consequential amendments to the Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023, to flow-through changes from the amended Act.</p>	In Progress (Tranche 2)
<p>3.2 Strengthen accountability of relevant employers to take action to improve gender equality in workplaces by amending the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</i> to:</p> <p>a. require relevant employers to report the date employers share with their employees, shareholders, and/or members the gender equality reports that the employers provided to WGEA, and</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p>	Completed
<p>b. require relevant employers to provide the Executive Summary</p>	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality</p>	Completed

report and Industry Benchmark report from WGEA to employers to their Board/Governing Body.	<p>Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>Employers will be required to provide the Executive Summary and Industry Benchmark report from their 2022-23 Gender Equality Reporting to their Board/Governing Body.</p> <p>Employers will receive these reports in late 2023.</p>	
Recommendation 4 – Reduce the regulatory burden on employers		
<p>4.1 Amend the <u>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</u> to:</p> <p>a. Remove the ‘reporting levels to the CEO’ question.</p>	Implemented on 31 March 2022 through earlier amendment to 2013 Instrument.	Completed
<p>b. Replace ‘annualised full-time equivalent figures’. Enable employers to report on actual earnings of part-time and casual employees as well as the number of hours employees are engaged.</p>	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
<p>c. Replace the parental leave questions that currently ask employers to report on the ‘proportion’ of their workforce. Instead, enable relevant employers to report by gender, employment status and manager/non-manager category:</p> <p>i. The number of employees with access to employer-funded paid parental leave for primary carers and for secondary carers and the eligibility period for access,</p> <p>ii. The number of employees who took a period of parental leave who ceased employment during, or at the end of that period.</p>	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
Recommendation 5 – Support Respect@Work implementation to prevent and address workplace sex-based harassment and discrimination		
<p>5.1 To align the Workplace Gender Equality Act and its associated legislative instrument, include ‘sex-based harassment and discrimination’ as a gender equality indicator in the Workplace Gender Equality Act. It is already Gender Equality Indicator 6 in the <i>Workplace</i></p>	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>New questions were voluntary in 2022-23 Gender Equality</p>	Completed

<i>Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1).</i>	Reporting and will be mandatory in 2023-24.	
Recommendation 6 – Research the best way to collect diversity data		
6.1 Undertake qualitative research with relevant stakeholders, led by WGEA, on the best way to collect more diversity data in addition to gender data to enable voluntary reporting, including on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability.	Further development underway (together with 7.2b) to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
Recommendation 7 – refine the gender equality indicators		
7.1 Amend the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</i> to include mandatory reporting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. employee age (year of birth), noting many employers report voluntarily. 	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p> <p>Employers will be required to report on employee age (year of birth), workplace location, superannuation on parental leave and CEO, head of business and casual manager remuneration in 2023-24 Gender Equality Reporting. These were all voluntary in 2022-23.</p>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. employee's primary workplace location, noting many employers report voluntarily 	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. whether superannuation is paid by an employer when an employee is on paid, unpaid employer-funded and/or government-funded parental leave, noting many employers report voluntarily, and 	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. remuneration data for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) or the equivalent (individual remuneration would not be public but would be aggregated to 	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to	Completed

calculate gender pay gaps and used for other remuneration analysis and insights).	Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	
7.2 Amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act and associated legislative instruments, in line with the ABS 2020 <i>Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables</i> , to enable WGEA to collect data on non-binary people.	Further development underway (together with 6.1) to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
7.3 To identify the best approach to improve other aspects of gender equality indicator reporting and reduce the regulatory burden on employers, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is to do further work to assess the need for legislative amendments to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. require employers to report to WGEA on occupations and jobs at Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) level 4 for non-managers 	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (not legislative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. include partnerships and partners in the WGEA dataset more comprehensively than they are currently (partners in partnership structures are considered owners not employees, this skews the reporting of gender pay gap data to WGEA), and 	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. make it mandatory for relevant employers to report on data as it relates to individual entities within corporate structures, not as it relates to the group hierarchy. 	WGEA is considering administrative options to implement this recommendation.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
Recommendation 8 – strengthen compliance and enforcement		
8.1 Amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act so all relevant employers must comply with WGEA's reporting obligations for Commonwealth grants eligibility and Commonwealth procurement participation. To support implementation of this recommendation, the Office for Women, with the Department of Finance and other relevant departments, will review the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles.	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms. A review of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles is currently underway.	In Progress (not legislative)
Recommendation 9 – set WGEA up for future success to support employers to drive gender equality in Australian workplaces		
9.1 WGEA is a critical enabler of the WGEA Review recommendations. The	\$18.5 million was provided through the March 2022-23	Completed

recommendations have resourcing implications for WGEA that will require consideration by the Australian Government. To maximise effectiveness, WGEA will need additional investment to implement the WGEA Review recommendations to drive action on gender equality in Australian workplaces.	Budget to support implementation of the WGEA Review (\$17.5m to WGEA and \$1m to OFW).	
9.2 To avoid confusion with company director roles, amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act to change the title of the 'Director of WGEA' to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).	Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.	Completed
9.3 WGEA to review its Employer of Choice Gender Equality citation to improve its effectiveness as a citation and incentive for more employers to progress gender equality in their workplaces.	WGEA has completed a review of its EOCGE citation, engaging GIWL ANU and Deloitte to assist. Implementation of recommendations will commence in 2023 and continue in 2024.	In Progress (not legislative)
9.4 WGEA to continue to improve the way it supports employers progress gender equality in their workplaces by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. reviewing the reports it provides to employers b. expanding its educational resources c. developing tailored 'off the shelf' policies for small and medium enterprises d. publicising the positive progress of employers e. improving the functionality of WGEA's digital reporting platform f. strengthening its capacity to assist employers to bridge their action gaps, and g. leading employers through the change management required by any reforms flowing from recommendations in this report. 	WGEA has significantly improved the functionality of the reporting platform, established a Capacity Building Team to work directly with employers and is improving reports, resources and tools to accelerate improvement in gender equality.	In Progress (not legislative)
Recommendation 10 – review the Workplace Gender Equality Act in five years from the date any legislative changes commence		
10.1 Formally review the effectiveness of action flowing from this WGEA Review five years from the commencement of any legislative reform.	Agreed	In Progress (not legislative)

Women in Leadership

Subject/Issue

The Government is committed to driving progress on women's representation in leadership at all levels, including in the Australian honours system.

Key points

Gender Balance on Government Boards

- The Government is committed to maintaining existing targets for gender balance on Australian Government Boards, originally implemented in 2016. These targets are:
 - Achieving 50 per cent representation of women at a whole-of-government level and at least 40 per cent representation of women and men at the individual board level;
 - For the first time, data at the individual board level was collected during the 2022-23 reporting period (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023).
- As at 31 December 2022, women held 51.4 per cent of positions on Australian Government boards.
 - This meets the Government's target for women to hold 50 per cent of overall Australian Government board positions, and is the highest overall result since reporting began in 2008;
 - As at 30 June 2022, 41 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions were held by women; 54.4 per cent of new appointments to Australian Government boards were women; and 46.4 per cent of nominations by external organisations were for women.
- OFW is finalising analysis of data for the 2022-23 reporting period, and results will be reported through the Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report 2022-23. The Annual Report will be published on the Office for Women website in late 2023.
- The Minister for Women will provide advice to relevant Ministers on the latest results for their portfolios, including analysis of additional data collected for the first time through the 2022-23 reporting period.
- Through consultation across Government, OFW is working to identify options to improve gender equality on Australian Government Boards, and will provide advice to Government in due course.

Women in the Order of Australia

- At the 2022 Federal Election, the Government committed to deliver a dedicated position in the Office for Women (OFW) that would be responsible for encouraging nominations of women to the Australian honours system.
 - This has been delivered as one full time equivalent team member, provided within OFW's current resourcing.
- Women are underrepresented in nominations made to the Order of Australia, reflecting inequalities experienced by women more broadly in Australian society.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women who are culturally and racially marginalised are particularly underrepresented.
- In 2022 OFW undertook a gendered analysis of the Order of Australia to better understand the underrepresentation of women and the barriers to improving gender equality.
 - Barriers include a lack of community understanding of the honours system, a lack of engagement from women in the awards and a shortage of nominations of women.
- OFW is utilising the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (PM&C) and OFW communications channels encourage increased nominations of women in the Order of Australia.
 - On 2 August 2023 OFW launched the #NominateAWoman social media campaign, encouraging the community to nominate women for the Order of Australia.
 - The campaign highlights areas of the honours system that suffer from lower nominations of women to demonstrate broader gender inequalities for example in the labour market system.
 - From 2 August to 31 August 2023 the #NominateAWoman campaign reached 550,385 people. The content was engaged with 2,395 times, with 1,035 likes, 91 comments, 238 shares and 1,031 reads of the news items.
- The nomination process is complex and presents challenges to submitting of nominations and engaging with the honours system. Limitations identified in the nomination process include:
 - the online form is currently only provided in English;

- the offline nomination form contains five sections, requiring the nominator to provide referees and a detailed explanation of the outstanding achievements of the candidate; and
- the form instructs nominators to not approach the candidate they are nominating, but asks seeks a wide range of personal of the nominee including details of their cultural background, previous awards, citizenship and address.

Further questions on the delivery of the honours system should be directed to the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

Women in Politics and the Women's Leadership Development Program (WLDP)

- Delivering on the Government's commitment to improve gender equality and diversity in politics, \$5 million (2022-23 to 2026-27) is being provided to Women for Election Australia to equip and encourage women across the political spectrum to run for public office at local, state and federal levels.
 - Women for Election Australia will lead a group of partners to deliver this non-partisan program, including Politics in Colour, Australian Local Government Women's Association, Global Institute of Women's Leadership, Ruth McGowan Pty Ltd, and Quantum Impact Group Pty Ltd.
 - This funding is provided as part of the WLDP.

Women's representation on private sector boards and as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)

- At the 2022 Federal election, the Government committed to working with ASX companies to boost the representation of women on private sector boards and as CEOs.
- OFW undertook consultation with key stakeholders to inform how the Government could best deliver this commitment.
 - This included discussions with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), Chief Executive Women (CEW), the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), Women on Boards, and the Chair of the ASX Corporate Governance Council.
 - OFW is developing options for Government to continue working with the private sector on this commitment and will provide advice to Government in due course.
- While ASX appointments are the responsibility of the private sector, there is an opportunity for Government to encourage and influence the private sector to strengthen its own efforts towards improving women's leadership. This could include through setting targets, staff development and data collection and reporting.
- The largest area for improvement in the private sector currently sits with progressing women's representation in companies in the ASX300 as unlike the ASX100 and ASX200 it is not on track to achieve gender parity.

The ASX300

- The *2023 Chief Executive Women (CEW) Senior Executive Census* (the Census) reports on the ASX300.
- Reporting for the Census focuses on the ASX300 as, like OFW, CEW recognises that the index is not on the path to parity, and offers opportunities to improve women's representation.
- The Census has found that women's representation in private sector senior leadership is only incrementally improving.
 - There are 26 women CEOs (9 per cent) in the ASX300 – a 3 percentage point increase since 2022;
 - Women's representation in CEO appointments has increased to 10 of 42 (23.8 per cent) from 4 of 28 (14.3 per cent) since 2022;
 - At current rate of change, it could take up to 50 years to reach gender parity in CEO positions.
- The Census found that women hold only 18 per cent of roles in the private sector that function as a 'pipeline' to becoming a CEO (Group Executive, COO, CFO) – a 3 percentage point increase since 2022.
- Women hold 29 per cent of Executive Leadership Team (ELT) roles – a 2 percentage point increase since 2022.
 - 23 per cent of ASX300 companies have a gender balanced ELT (at least 40 per cent women) – a 6 percentage point increase since 2022;
 - At the current rate of change, it could take over a decade to reach gender parity in ELTs (over 14 years for the ASX300);
 - ASX companies with gender balance targets (at least 40 per cent women, or better) were three times more likely to achieve gender balance in ELT than companies without targets.
- The *Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) September 2023 Gender Diversity Progress Report* found that women represent only 35.6 per cent of board members in ASX300 companies.
 - The vast majority (over 90 per cent) of directorships held by women are non-executive director roles.
- The *Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2022 Progress Report* found that women remain underrepresented in management positions, with an improvement of only 1.1 percentage points between 2019-2020 and 2021-2022.
 - Only one quarter of organisations report they have policies/strategies relating to the composition of their governing bodies.

Background

- SEQoN 0389. Gender balance in Australian Government board report. May Budget Estimates 2023-24. Response tabled 14 July 2023 (*Refer to Attachment B for QoN and Departmental response*).

Gender Balance on Government Boards

- In 2009, the Australian Government committed to a gender diversity target of women holding 40 per cent of government board positions.
- Following the achievement of the 40 per cent target the Australian Government committed to an increased gender diversity target of women holding 50 per cent of Government board positions overall from 1 July 2016.
- At this time, the Government also introduced a new target for women and men to each hold at least 40 per cent of positions at the individual board level (gender balanced boards).
- During the 2022 Federal Election, the Government committed to maintaining the target of 50 per cent representation of women on Australian Government Boards. This commitment also included:
 - further consideration to new targets for Chair and Deputy Chair positions;
 - boosting board representation in portfolios that are lagging in gender diversity; and
 - addressing under-representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in board positions.
- Through the 2022-23 reporting period, OFW collected additional data on disaggregated Chair and Deputy Chair positions, individual board level and remuneration data.
- This additional data has some limitations:
 - Remuneration is inconsistently reported, and is often amalgamated with salary information. This means a 'gender pay gap' specific to board appointments cannot be understood;
 - Data is only collected on positions which are deemed reportable in line with reporting guidelines.

Women in the Order of Australia

- OFW has undertaken comprehensive analysis of data to understand the under representation of women in the Order of Australia. This analysis indicates a key contributor to this under representation is the lack of nomination of women.
 - Data used by OFW was provided by the Office of the Official Secretary of the Governor General (OOSGG) and is not publically available.
 - The OOSGG administers the Order of Australia.
 - Publically, the OOSGG does not categorise awards by industry, but their back end data does. OFW uses this back end data to analyse what industries or categories of awards are not equally representative of women.
- The Australian honours and awards system includes 58 awards administered by various organisations. These include:
 - The Order of Australia
 - Meritorious Awards
 - Military Awards
 - Bravery Decorations
- The Order of Australia recognises Australians who have demonstrated outstanding service or exceptional achievement. There are four levels of the award, which are recognised across two divisions – a General and a Military Division:
 - Companion of the Order (AC) – *(highest level of award)*
 - Officer of the Order (AO)
 - Member of the Order (AM)
 - Medal of the Order (OAM) – *(lowest level of award)*
- The award is administered by the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General Secretariat, and is governed by the Constitution of the Order of Australia (signed by the King).
- The Order relies on community nominations; anyone can nominate.
 - The Council of the Order of Australia (the Council) considers approximately 2000 nominations each year;
 - There is currently a backlog of nominations, it takes approximately two years for a nomination to be considered by the Council.
- The Council for the Order of Australia is an independent body that considers nominations for appointments and awards in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

- There are 19 members including state and territory representatives, public office holders (ex-officio) and community representatives – currently made up of 12 women (including the Chair, Shelley Reys AO, and member Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher) and seven men.
 - Minister Gallagher, in her role as Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council, is an ex-officio representative on the Council.
 - The Minister has appointed the Honourable Patrick Gorman MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, as a deputy ex-officio representative in her place.
 - Deputy Secretary Governance Group PM&C also sits as ex-officio Representative on the Council for the Order of Australia.
- On 14 October 2022, the Prime Minister appointed the first woman and First Nations woman as the Chair of the Council, Ms Shelley Reys AO.
 - OFW was not consulted on this appointment.
- The OOSGG is undertaking work to improve nominations of women in the honours system, including:
 - Creating a range of promotion and guidance materials to drive engagement with the Order of Australia and highlight the diversity of honours recipients;
 - simplifying the nomination form and improving the nominating process; and
 - engaging government and non-government stakeholders (industry associations, government departments, not-for-profits and influential individuals) to encourage more diverse nominations by members of the community.

Key facts and figures

Women in the Order of Australia

2023 Order of Australia Awards (General Division)

- In the combined 2023 Honours Lists (Australia Day and King's Birthday), **women received 49.4 per cent of the Order of Australia awards** in the General Division.
 - Australia Day – women received **48.1** per cent of Order of Australia General Division awards.
 - King's Birthday – women received **50.5** per cent of Order of Australia General Division awards. This is the **first time women have received a majority of awards**.
- The representation of women has improved each year since 2016, largely through community advocacy, the work of the OGG, OFW and state-based programs (WA and Victoria), and is up from:
 - 31 per cent in 2016;
 - 46.6 per cent in 2022.
- In the 2023 Honours Lists, women were underrepresented in the three of the four levels of Order of Australia General Division:
 - 41.7 per cent of Companion of the Order (AC) (*highest level of award*)
 - 44.1 per cent of Officer of the Order (AO)
 - 52.5 per cent of Member of the Order of Australia (AM)
 - 48.8 per cent of the Medal of the Order of Australia (AOM) (*lowest level of award*)
- Further detail on the 2023 Honours Lists is at [Attachment A](#).
- On 23 January 2023, Shelley Reys AO, Chair of the Council of the Order of Australia, wrote an opinion piece in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.
 - Reys highlighted the lack of diversity among Order of Australia recipients (women, First Nations and people from CALD/CARM backgrounds) and encouraged readers to nominate people they see as deserving of recognition to better reflect the diversity of the Australian community.

The Australian Parliament

- As at 1 May 2023, in the 47th Parliament, women hold 45.1 per cent of seats across both chambers. This is the highest number of women in an Australian Parliament on record.
- This is made up by 38.4 per cent of seats in the House of Representatives, and 56.6 per cent in the Senate.
- There are 10 women in Cabinet (43.5 per cent), which is the largest number of women to ever hold positions in an Australian Cabinet.
- Women make up 49.2 per cent of positions on the 67 current Parliamentary committees.
 - Women hold 45.4 per cent of all Parliamentary committee chair and deputy chair positions.

The Australian Public Service (APS)

- The APS has successfully demonstrated that targeted gender equality strategies can be effective in bringing more women into senior leadership positions.
 - According to the Australia Public Service Commission (APSC), an independent evaluation of *Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2019*, found that the strategy had a positive impact on progressing gender equality across the APS.
 - The APSC has implemented the *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26*, which sets out a continuing pathway to realising the benefits of a gender equal workplace.
- According to APS Employment Data, women held 53.4 per cent of Senior Executive Staff (SES) roles in the APS as at 30 June 2023, an increase from 26 per cent in 2001.
 - However, gender parity has yet to be achieved at the highest SES levels. Women hold 47.4 per cent of SES Band 3 roles, and 6 out of 16 Secretary roles.

Date:	3 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Social Policy and International Engagement Branch
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	OFW Grants, Policy and Implementation Team

Attachment A: Order of Australia 2023 Statistics Breakdown

Analysis from the 2023 Order of Australia (General Division) Recipient Lists

- Women received more awards than men for services to arts, education, conservation and environment, disability, community, public service (Federal) and information technology.
- Men received more awards than women for services to architecture, law, medicine, parliament and politics, public service, transport, sport, tourism and hospitality and religion.
- No women received awards for services to engineering, building and construction, surveying and mapping and industrial relations.

Men and women received roughly the same number of awards for services to business and commerce, dentistry, international relations, local government, multicultural affairs, media, mining, veterinary science, science, technological developments and research and development.

Nomination versus success rate

- While the recent success rate of nominations for women is slightly higher compared to men, trends over time indicate that as the number of nominations considered for men and women begin to equalise, so does the gender disaggregated success rate of nominations.
- In 2023, the success rate for nominations (percentage of nominations awarded) was 69.8 per cent.
 - The success rate for men was 64.4 per cent (received 838 awards from 1301 nominations) whereas the success rate for women was 76.4 per cent (received 818 awards from 1070 nominations).

2023 Order of Australia Results		Number of nominations considered
Australia Day	Men	532 (53.0%)
	Women	471 (47.0%)
	Total	1003
King's Birthday	Men	769 (56.2%)
	Women	599 (43.8%)
	Total	1368
2023, aggregate	Men	1301 (54.9%)
	Women	1070 (45.1%)
	Total	2371

Awards

- In 2023, women received 49.4 per cent of awards for the Order of Australia General Division.
 - Australia Day – women received 48.1 per cent of Order of Australia General Division awards.
 - King's Birthday – women received 50.5 per cent of Order of Australia General Division awards. This is the first time women have received majority of awards.

		AC	AO	AM	OAM	TOTAL
Australia Day	Men	66.7%	63.8%	48.0%	52.2%	52.0%
	Women	33.3%	36.2%	52.0%	47.8%	48.0%
	Total awards (number)	6	47	177	506	736
King's Birthday	Men	50.0%	47.8%	47.2%	50.5%	49.5%
	Women	50.0%	52.2%	52.8%	49.5%	50.5%
	Total	6	46	246	622	920
2023, aggregate	Men	58.3%	55.9%	47.5%	51.2%	50.6%
	Women	41.7%	44.1%	52.5%	48.8%	49.4%
	Total	12	93	423	1128	1656

Attachment B

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2023-24

Prime Minister and Cabinet

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program Group: Office for Women

Topic: Gender balance in Australian Government board report

Senator: the Hon Jane Hume

Question reference number: 0389

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 14 July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Question:

In response to a series of questions on the Gender balance in Australian Government board [report], representatives of the Office of Women previously told the Committee: “we have actually just conducted the survey and are undertaking the analysis, so we will have to report to the minister, and the next report will come out a bit later this year”.

- a. Is there any update on the timeframes for the release of this report?
- b. Has the Minister or her office been briefed yet in relation to the report?
- c. Please provide the following information from the latest survey you undertook:
 - i. The percentage women currently on government boards
 - ii. The percentage of women serving as a chair of a government board
 - iii. The percentage of women serving as a deputy chair of a government board
 - iv. The number of women have been appointed to government boards so far, this financial year
 - v. This as a percentage of the total appointees so far, this financial year
- d. What discussions have been had within the Office for Women on options to increase female representation on boards across government?
- e. Have any of these changes or suggestions been provided to the Minister or her office?
- f. What discussions or options have been put forward in relation to boosting female representation across Chair and Deputy Chair positions?
- g. Please provide on notice a table of every Government board with the following information:
 - i. The name of the board
 - ii. The portfolio it belongs to
 - iii. The Minister who is responsible for the Board; and
 - iv. The percentage of membership that are women.

Answer:

- a. The information about the gender balance on government boards for the six month period of 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022 will be published on the Office for Women website by 30 June 2023.

- Each year, Office for Women publishes a comprehensive annual report on Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards which covers 12 months of data for a financial year period. The next annual report for the period of 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 will be published in late 2023.
- b. The Office for Women has briefed the Minister for Women's office on the six month results for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. The Office for Women will brief the Minister on the 2022-2023 Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards results once portfolio results have been received and analysed.
 - c.
 - i. As at 31 December 2022, women hold 51.4% of positions on Australian Government boards.
 - ii.–iii. As at 31 December 2022, women hold 40.4% of chair and deputy chair positions.
 - iv. A total of 146 women have been appointed to Australian Government boards from 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. Office for Women has not yet received data for the period 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2023.
 - v. Women have received 52.1% of new appointments on Australian Government boards for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022.
 - d–f. Office for Women have provided advice to the Minister for Women on maintaining existing targets, of 50 per cent women's representation at a whole-of-government level and at least 40 per cent representation of *both* women and men at the individual board level. The Minister has been briefed on promoting women's representation at Chair and Deputy Chair levels.
 - g. The Office for Women has collected data on the number of women who hold Australian Government Board positions for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. The data does not specify the names of the boards associated with these positions.

Women in Sport

Subject/Issue

Participation of women and girls in sport is important for health, social and economic benefits and as a driver of gender equality.

Key points

- The Australian Government supports and encourages the participation of all women and girls in sport for its health, social and economic benefits.¹
- The Office for Women (OFW) is engaging with the Office for Sport, in the Department of Health and Aged Care, on initiatives and strategies that support access and participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity.

2023 FIFA Women's World Cup

- The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup set a world record for attendance at a women's sport event, with 1,977,824 fans attending the 64 matches and an average of 30,904 fans each game.
- On 16 August 2023, the Matildas' semi-final match against England became the most viewed Australian television program – sport or otherwise, reaching 11.15 million Australians, and an average audience of 7.13 million people during the broadcast on Channel Seven.
- The Matildas' finished fourth in their best performance to-date.

2023-24 May Budget

- The 2023-24 Budget committed \$2.1 million over two years to support women and girls' participation in talent and development programs to increase female representations in coaching, officiating and sports administration.
 - OFW was consulted in the development of this funding commitment.
- In the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government also committed to developing a new National Sport Plan.

¹ In 2018-19, sport and physical activity had a net positive impact on the health system of \$321 million. The overall benefit was higher for females (\$333 million) than males (\$69 million), mostly due to the lower cost of injuries among females. Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023) [Economics of sport and physical activity participation and injury](#).

- OFW is working with the Office for Sport in the Department of Health and Aged Care on the inclusion of women and girls.
- On 19 August 2023, the Government announced \$200 million to establish a grants program, *Play Our Way*, to promote equitable access for women and girls to participate in sport.
 - OFW was consulted on this proposal and will work with the Office for Sport in the Department of Health and Aged Care to ensure that the program delivers on its intended outcomes and advances the Government's objectives on gender equality.

Further questions should be referred to the Health and Aged Care portfolio.

Women Leaders in Sport

- Under the Women's Leadership and Development Program, OFW delivers the Women Leaders in Sport (WLIS) Program, which supports women's leadership progression in sport.
 - A total of \$3.4 million has been committed to the WLIS Program over 2020-21 to 2023-24.

Transgender people in Sport

- Participation of transgender people in sport is determined by the governing body for each sport.
- It is not unlawful under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (section 42) to discriminate on the grounds of sex, gender identity or intersex status to exclude a person over the age of 12 from participating in competitive sporting activity in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.
- On 15 June 2023, the Australian Sports Commission released new guidelines with criteria to assist Australian sporting bodies to balance fairness and inclusion of transgender and gender diverse athletes in high performance (professional) sports.
 - The guidelines include principles for adopting trans-eligibility rules that include consideration of all the relevant circumstances, are minimally restrictive and afford individuals the right to natural justice.
 - OFW was consulted in 2022 on the development of the guidelines.

Date:	13 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Social Policy and International Engagement
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

Women's Health

Women's Health

The Government is committed to ensuring women and girls have access to tailored, high-quality healthcare that addresses their health needs, underpinned by research and evidence.

Key points

- The Australian Government is committed to improving health equity for all women. This includes:
 - addressing the health impacts of violence against women and girls,
 - including how the health system identifies cases of violence, responds and refers victim survivors to further services; and
 - protecting and promoting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all women and girls in Australia
 - including access to safe, affordable maternal health services, including child birth and pregnancy termination services.
- Through the introduction of gender responsive budgeting OFW is supporting Government to look at new policy proposals to ensure they provide sound gender analysis and mitigate any potential negative impacts on women and girls.
- This is a significant way to combat gender bias in the health system, and build the capacity of decision-makers to understand gendered dimensions of health and the health system.
- The ***National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030*** outlines Australia's national approach to improving health outcomes for all women and girls throughout their lives, particularly those at greatest risk of poor health.
- The five priority areas identified in the Strategy are:
 - maternal, sexual and reproductive health;
 - healthy ageing;
 - chronic conditions and preventive health;
 - mental health; and
 - health impacts of violence against women and girls.
- The Government established the ***National Women's Health Advisory Council*** in December 2022 to guide the delivery of the National Women's

Health Strategy 2020-30 and promote better health outcomes for women and girls.

- The Council has established subcommittees to look at gender bias in the health system across the areas of safety, research, empowerment, and access, care and outcomes.
- The Council has conducted a national survey on experiences of gender bias in the health system, which closed on 13 October 2023.
 - It is expected that preliminary results will be made public in the first quarter of 2024.
- Members and special advisers appointed to the Advisory Council were announced by Minister Kearney on 31 January 2023.
 - An additional member and special adviser were appointed at the Council's 5 April meeting.
 - The Office for Women was consulted by Department of Health on the proposed members and special advisers, but not on subsequent appointments.

2023-24 May Budget

Key investments in women's health through the 2023-24 Budget included:

- Building the evidence base:
 - \$26.4 million to extend support for research and data collection activities that support women and girls' health outcomes. This includes:
 - Funding to continue and strengthen the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH) by establishing a First Nations data access strategy and governance mechanism, increasing the diversity of participants, and expanding the collection of comprehensive maternal and perinatal data.
 - Support for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of *Woman centred care: Strategic directions for Australian maternity services*, to ensure Australian maternity services are equitable, safe, woman centred, informed and evidenced-based.
- Investing in tailored women's health care:
 - \$16.8 million to introduce a new Medicare benefit item for an gene expression profiling test (EndoPredict®) to determine a patient's risk of recurrent breast cancer.
 - Support to subsidise the costs of egg, sperm or embryo storage for Australians with cancer or at risk of passing on genetic diseases or conditions, for eligible participants who have undergone MBS-covered genetic testing.
 - In the October 2022 Budget, the Government deferred funding for *Assistance for IVF – Assisted Reproductive Technology Storage* announced in the 2022–23 March Budget to undertake further consultation on the design and implementation of the measure.¹
 - \$6 million over two years from 2023-24 to support Australian Red Cross Lifeblood's role in maintaining and expanding delivery of donor milk.
 - \$5.3 million over two years from 2023-24 to the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA's) National Breastfeeding Helpline.
 - \$6.2 million in 2023-24 to support children to build and maintain positive body image, and reduce body dissatisfaction and appearance pressures.
 - \$2.8 million in 2023-24 to extend mental health supports for Australians with eating disorders and their families.

¹ Budget Paper 2, October 2022-23 Budget, p143

- Extending existing alcohol and drug treatment in communities, including \$3.5 million to The Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women.
- Improving support for health care, including:
 - \$3.5 billion to address the decline in GP bulk billing rates for people on low incomes and children;
 - The Government is doubling the dispensing quantities for over 300 PBS-listed medicines, which will reduce the number of visits to pharmacies and general practitioners, saving Australians over \$1.6 billion in out of pocket costs over the next four years.
 - This will help women, 49 per cent of which are estimated to have one or more common chronic conditions.
 - A range of medicines that treat conditions that disproportionately affect women will also be cheaper and easier to access, including raloxifene for the treatment of post-menopausal osteoporosis and tamoxifen to reduce the risk of breast cancer.
 - This measure will be implemented in 3 stages over 12 months. Stage one commenced on 1 September 2023 and represents roughly one third of all the medicines eligible for 60-day prescriptions.
 - \$98.9 million to implement a model of care that connects frequent hospital users with general practices to receive comprehensive, multidisciplinary care in the community which will reduce the likelihood of hospital readmission.
 - \$99.1 million over four years to introduce a new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item for GP consultations of 60 minutes or more (Level E) to support improved access and affordability for patients with chronic conditions and complex needs.
 - This includes, but is not limited to, patients experiencing chronic conditions, complex or acute mental health needs, patients experiencing family and domestic violence and reproductive health issues like menopause.
 - \$91.3 million to build the mental health workforce, including 500 additional psychology postgraduate placements and other training programs.
- On 29 May the Government announced that it will provide \$70 million for eating disorder and mental health research, treatment and education.

- This is in response to the rise in self-harm and eating disorders in young people, and is in addition to investments through the May Budget.
- Women and girls experience eating disorders at higher rates than men and boys.
 - Eating disorders are the third most common chronic illness among young women in Australia.

Family, domestic and sexual violence

- Family, domestic and sexual violence can have profound impacts on a women's physical and mental health.
 - Women who have experienced sexual violence report worse physical and mental health and wellbeing, and have an increased risk of chronic conditions.
 - Pregnancy presents a risky time for the commencement, or escalation, of intimate partner violence.
- OFW is working with the Department of Health to assess options to strengthen training for the health workforce to recognise, respond to and refer cases of family, domestic and sexual violence.
 - This recognises that the health sector provides much of the frontline support for victim-survivors and a general practitioner is often the first person a victim-survivor turns to for advice and support.
 - This includes investigating options for training in medical degrees and continuing professional development (CPD) for general practitioners, registered psychologists and psychiatrists.
 - This responds to tasking from the Prime Minister to the Minister for Health and Aged Care to work with the Women's and Women's Safety Ministerial Council and Minister Gallagher to respond to recommendations made by the Coroner's Court of Victoria.
- OFW (s 22(1)(a)(ii)) is also represented on the Mental Health and FDSV Expert Reference Group, and has informed the Model of Care for a new \$67.2 million *Supporting Recovery* pilot.
 - The pilot will provide integrated support and trauma-informed recovery care for victim-survivors across six Primary Health Networks.

Dementia

- In February, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released data showing dementia is now the leading cause of disease burden among Australians aged 65 and over.
 - Dementia is the second leading cause of death for Australians and the leading cause of death of women.
- Key measures in the 2023-24 Federal Budget that will assist with addressing dementia include:
 - Investment in rarer forms of dementia - \$75,000 for research to assist improving care for children with dementia and \$2.2 million over five years for a Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease scheme.
 - \$112 million for Australians living in residential aged care to receive more regular visits, health assessments and care planning through additional incentive payments to GPs and primary care clinics.
 - \$166.8 million for additional Home Care Packages.
 - \$99.1 million over five years from 2022-23 for the introduction of GP consultations over 60 minutes, which will provide access to higher rebates for longer consultations for patients with complex conditions and needs, which may benefit dementia patients.
- The pay increase for the aged care workforce will assist with ensuring quality care for people with dementia.

Eating Disorders

- On 30 August 2023, the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC) released the *National Eating Disorders Strategy 2023–2033* (Strategy), which will help guide policies, programs and services to better support people with eating disorders across Australia over the next 10 years.
 - The Strategy provides a roadmap for all Governments and the health and community sectors to progress reform, and outlines the key components and minimum standards that should be in place in an effective system of care for eating disorders.
 - Development of the Strategy was funded by the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care.
- The NEDC consulted extensively during the Strategy's development to ensure it reflects the varied insights of people with lived and living experience, clinicians, researchers, service providers, public health experts and governments.
- Eating disorders may occur at any stage of life, but research² suggests that they occur most often among young women (3.5 per cent females ages 11-17 compared with 1.4 per cent of males).
- In 2015–16, 95 per cent of Australian hospitalisations with a principal diagnosis of an eating disorder were for females.
 - Females aged 15-24 made up the largest proportion of these hospitalisations (57%).

² The Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2012-13

First Nations women's health

- First Nations women and girls are more likely to experience significantly poorer health and health outcomes than non-Indigenous women and girls. This extends across many key areas, including:
 - life expectancy and mortality
 - incidences of mental illness and chronic conditions
 - health risk factors, such as smoking, alcohol, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating habits
 - sexual health and child and maternal health
 - potentially avoidable deaths and hospitalisations³.
- First Nations women also experience poorer health outcomes due to the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma, institutional racial discrimination and barriers to accessing culturally safe health care.
 - This results in adverse health outcomes and health service avoidance.⁴
- Other social determinants of health, such as employment and housing adequacy, are also more likely to affect First Nations people⁵.
- The Government has committed \$363.1 million over four years from 2023-24 to support the Government's commitment to close the gap in First Nations peoples' health and wellbeing outcomes.
- The Government is continuing to invest in First Nations women's health through the 2023-24 Budget, including:
 - \$238.5 million over four years from 2023–24 to improve First Nations cancer outcomes through building capability and growing the healthcare workforce to improve screening and prevention activities, coordination, access support and research and data collection
 - Cancer (and other neoplasms) is the leading cause of death for Indigenous females.⁶
 - Extending existing alcohol and drug treatment in communities, including \$3.5 million to The Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women.

³ National Women's Health Strategy, 2020-2030

⁴ Impact of racism and discrimination on the physical and mental health among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Australia: a protocol for a scoping review; [Position statement-Impacts of racism on the health and wellbeing of indigenous Australians](#); [NACCHO Aboriginal health and racism](#)

⁵ [Determinants of health for Indigenous Australians - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](#) accessed 10 November 2022.

⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Health Performance Framework – Summary Report 2023

- \$28.2 million over three years from 2023-24 for workforce accommodation to support the delivery of 30 dialysis units for First Nations people in regional and remote Australia with end-stage kidney disease.
 - Death rates for Indigenous females are higher than Indigenous males for kidney disease and diabetes.⁷
- \$1.4 million over two years from 2023–24 to expand the delivery of the Strong Born campaign which provides information about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder to First Nations peoples
- Key measures in the October 2022-23 Budget included:
 - \$22.5 million over three years to establish a dedicated Birthing on Country Centre of Excellence at Nowra on the NSW south coast, to provide culturally safe and appropriate maternity services to First Nations women.
 - \$14.2 million over three years of additional support for Rheumatic Heart Disease treatment, detection and prevention activities in high-risk First Nations communities.
 - Rheumatic Heart Disease disproportionately affects First Nations women and girls. In 2020, 67 per cent of patients receiving a rheumatic heart disease diagnosis were female⁸.

⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Health Performance Framework – Summary Report 2023

⁸ [Acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in Australia, 2016–2020, Data - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/data-reports/acute-rheumatic-fever-and-rheumatic-heart-disease-in-australia-2016-2020)

Menopause

- OFW is aware of concerns about the impact menopause may have on women's health, employment and retirement decisions, and how this may affect their superannuation balances and retirement income.
- OFW is working towards a fuller understanding of this complex issue and how it impacts Australian women.
 - OFW has conducted a preliminary scan of existing literature in the Australian and international contexts.
 - OFW is working with stakeholders, including state and territory Offices for Women, the Department of Health, and others to gather further information and develop a set of possible responses.
- The National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030 also prioritises:
 - further research on the impacts of menopause, including impacts of work participation and economic security; and
 - support to women and their health care providers to manage effects of menopause.
- The Australasian Menopause Society (AMS) held a 'Menopause Matters' parliamentary roundtable in early March with the *Parliamentary Friends of Women's Health* and was part of a coalition of organisations that provided a pre-budget submission for the 2023-24 Federal Budget.
 - The submission focused on: national policy framework and action plan on menopause, including for workplaces, research into impact of menopause on workforce participation; public awareness campaign; GP education; and increasing menopause care, support clinical trials and research.
 - The coalition includes: AMS; Jean Hailes for Women's Health; Australian Federation of Medical Women; Flinders University; and the HER Centre (mental health) and Women's Health Research Program in Monash University.
- The Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry report into universal access to reproductive healthcare – "Ending the postcode lottery" – also recommended that Australian Government consider commissioning research and policy responses on the impact of reproductive health on women's participation in the workforce and the adequacy of existing leave entitlements.

Evidence and data

- In Australia, the average age of menopause is 51. Symptoms of menopause may be short-lived (a few years) or can continue into a woman's 60s, 70s and 80s.
- ABS Retirement and Retirement Intentions data (ABS) shows 26.8 per cent of working women retire under the age of 55.
- In a submission ahead of the October 2022-23 Budget, the Australian Institute of Superannuation of Trustees (AIST) estimated, based on UK research⁹, that menopause is costing Australian women more than \$17 billion annually in lost earnings and superannuation.
- According to Jean Hailes for Women's Health, 20 per cent of women have severe menopause symptoms that interfere with their daily life¹⁰. It advocates for work adjustments and greater workplace flexibility to help women manage their symptoms.

⁹ <https://www.thephoenixgroup.com/sites/phoenix-group/files/phoenix-group/views-and-insights/Menopause%20Report/Menopause%20and%20Employment.pdf>

¹⁰ [Understanding menopause: Your questions answered \(jeanhailes.org.au\)](https://jeanhailes.org.au) booklet

Endometriosis

- The Government provided funding of \$16.4 million in the October 2022 budget to establish 20 Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain GP Clinics across Australia, to support those experiencing endometriosis and pelvic pain.
 - They are part of a \$58.3 million suite of initiatives aimed at improving approaches to endometriosis and pelvic pain including establishing a digital platform for key resources and developing a new endometriosis management plan.
 - The clinics are supported by the National Action Plan for Endometriosis, which provides a blueprint to increase research and improve diagnosis, treatment and understanding of the condition.
- The clinics, across regional and metropolitan locations, will improve access to multi-disciplinary care, focusing on improving diagnostic delay and promoting early access to intervention, care, and treatment of endometriosis.
- On 3 September, the government announced an additional two clinics (in Adelaide and Western Sydney), bringing the total to 22 clinics.
- The ABC article *Calls for endometriosis clinic expansion as research reveals major gaps* (21 August) noted a review by the Australian Coalition for Endometriosis (ACE), which found gaps in knowledge and access to services and support.

Further questions should be directed to the Health Portfolio

Gender bias in the health system

- OFW is alive to the bias that exists in health service delivery and research that leads to women experiencing a range of poorer health outcomes compared to men.
- Reasons for this includes gender bias in research, diagnosis and treatment, which can lead to misdiagnosis, delayed diagnosis and under-treatment. For example:
 - Recent research demonstrates poorer health outcomes and higher mortality for women from cardiovascular disease,¹¹ including:
 - being half as likely as men to receive diagnostic tests and treatment for heart disease;
 - being less likely to be referred for cardiac rehabilitation and prescribed preventive medications on discharge from hospital; and
 - experiencing more than double the rate of death and serious adverse cardiovascular events within six months of discharge.¹²
- Misdiagnosis and delayed diagnosis in women may also be due to sex differences in symptoms, presentation, susceptibility, treatment responses and contributing causes for certain conditions, such as lung cancer and heart disease.
- OFW is working with the Department of Health and other relevant parts to address this bias, including ensuring proposals brought forward in Budget processes do not continue to compound this inequality.
- Gender bias in the health system and research is highlighted as an area of focus in the terms of reference of the National Women's Health Advisory Council.
 - The Council has conducted a national survey on experiences of gender bias in the health system, which closed on 13 October 2023.
 - It is expected that preliminary results will be made public in the first quarter of 2024.
- Funding in the May budget of \$26.4 million to extend support for research and data collection, including for Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH), will continue to help inform government on the differences between men and women's health.

¹¹ <https://www1.racgp.org.au/news/gp/clinical/same-disease,-different-outcomes-heart-attack-and>



¹² <https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2018/209/3/differences-management-and-outcomes-men-and-women-st-elevation-myocardial>

Reproductive health

- The Government is committed to working alongside states and territories to ensure equitable access to sexual and reproductive health care and to address the underlying factors that limit genuine choice.
- Since being elected, the Government has made a range of investments in reproductive health, including funding in the May budget of:
 - \$5.3 million over two years from 2023-24 to the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA's) National Breastfeeding Helpline;
 - \$6 million over two years from 2023-24 to extend the Australia Red Cross Lifeblood's role to maintain and expand delivery of donor milk across Australia; and
 - \$99.1 million over five years from 2022-23 for the introduction of GP consultations over 60 minutes, to which will provide access to higher rebates for longer consultations for patients with complex conditions and needs. This includes patients with needs related to mental health, family, domestic and sexual violence, chronic conditions as well as reproductive health issues like menopause.
- The May budget also funded subsidised costs of egg, sperm or embryo storage for Australians with cancer or at risk of passing on genetic diseases/conditions, who have undergone MBS-covered genetic testing.
- In addition the October 22-23 budget provided:
 - \$22.5 million over three years to establish a dedicated Birthing on Country Centre of Excellence at Nowra on the NSW south coast, to provide culturally safe and appropriate maternity services to First Nations women.
 - \$23 million in maternal health and bereavement support for women and families that have experienced the tragic loss of a child to stillbirth or miscarriage, including support to increase the numbers of autopsies and investigations undertaken following stillbirth.
 - A \$58.3 million package for endometriosis and pelvic pain, re-confirmed in the October 2022-23 Budget.

Senate Inquiry

- The Government welcomes the 25 May report of the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs on its inquiry into universal access to reproductive healthcare. We are considering its recommendations.
 - We acknowledge that there is inequity in the health system when it comes to maternal and reproductive healthcare and we are working to improve access.

- The Department of Health led a Government submission to the inquiry, to which OFW contributed.
- The Department of Health and Aged Care is leading the drafting of the response to the report and its 36 recommendations, working across government.
 - Recommendation 36 recommended that the Australian Government consider commissioning research and policy responses on the impact of reproductive health on women's participation in the workforce and the adequacy of existing leave entitlements.
 - Other recommendations included timely access to the latest and safest contraceptive methods, options to make contraception more affordable, improved access to medical terminations, and for all public hospitals to provide surgical terminations or timely and affordable alternative pathways to local providers.
- OFW has been briefed separately by individuals that provided submissions to the inquiry, including:
 - s 47F 
 - s 47F 

Any further questions should be directed to the Department of Health

Children Born Alive Bill Inquiry

- The Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022 (Children Born Alive Bill) was introduced to the Senate by Senator Matt Canavan (with support from Senators Alex Antic and Ralph Babet) on 30 November 2022.
 - The Bill seeks to 'clarify that children born alive are persons; require health practitioners to provide medical care, treatment and statistics on children born alive as a result of terminations; and provide that the mother of a child born alive is not liable to prosecution for an offence in respect of that child'.
- Submissions closed on 10 March 2023, and more than 80 submissions were received.
 - Neither OFW nor the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care made a submission.
- A hearing was held in Canberra on 8 June and the Committee delivered its report on 31 August.

- The Committee raised serious concerns with the Bill in relation to Constitutional and human rights issues, risks to service delivery, and risks to culturally appropriate practice.
- The Committee declared the Bill a matter of conscience and made no recommendations.

Any further questions should be directed to the Department of Health

Access to maternal, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services

Pregnancy termination (medical and surgical)

- Australia's health system provides for safe and legal termination of pregnancies in all states and territories, through a range of public and private settings including through primary care providers, family planning clinics, women's health clinics, and public and private hospitals.
 - The circumstances in which termination services can legally be provided vary.
- The Government has committed to working alongside states and territories to ensure equitable access to sexual and reproductive health care and to address the underlying factors that limit genuine choice.
- Access to pregnancy termination services is a state and territory responsibility and the laws relating to pregnancy termination are a matter for individual jurisdictions.
 - Early termination (up to 14 weeks gestation) is available Australia-wide and later term terminations are available in most states and territories.
- While abortion is legal in all state and territories, the Government acknowledges that geographic location and high out-of-pocket costs can affect access to pregnancy termination services. The Government provides support for pregnancy termination services through public hospital funding, Medicare Benefits Schedule rebates for relevant services, including telehealth consultations, and subsidies for the cost of medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
 - As the system managers of their public health and hospital systems, states and territories are responsible for determining mix and function of the services they deliver and the locations from which they are provided.
 - Fees charged by private providers are not controlled by the Australian Government.
- In mid-July, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved an application to remove restrictions around health professionals prescribing

and dispensing the medical abortion pills mifepristone and misoprostol (known as MS-2 Step).

- This is a significant step in reducing barriers to safe and affordable medical abortions for women, particularly for women in rural and remote areas.
- Previous restrictions meant that only 10 per cent of doctors and 30 per cent of pharmacies were certified or registered to prescribe and dispense the medication.
- Medical abortion is available up to nine weeks (63 days) gestation.

Access to maternal health services, including for childbirth

- The *National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030* has maternal, sexual, and reproductive health as a priority area, including support for enhanced access to maternal and perinatal health care services.
- Access to maternal and perinatal health care, including for women in remote locations and First Nations women, is also a priority under the *Woman-centred care: Strategic directions for Australian maternity services* (2019).
 - The strategy was developed by the Australian Government in partnership with states and territories, and aims to ensure maternity services in Australia are equitable, safe, woman-centred and evidence-based.

Key facts and figures

- Female Australians born in 2018-2020 can expect to live around four years longer than males (85.3 years compared to men's 81.2 years)¹³.
- In 2020, the leading cause of death for female Australians was dementia¹⁴, including Alzheimer's disease (9,325 or 12% of deaths).
 - This was followed by Coronary heart disease (6, 547 or 8.5% of deaths); cerebrovascular disease (5,496); lung cancer (3,706); and breast cancer (3,110).
- This compares to men, whose leading cause of death was coronary heart disease (10,040 or 12% of deaths); dementia including Alzheimer's disease (5,250 of 6.2% of deaths); lung cancer (4,751); cerebrovascular disease (3,974); and Prostate cancer (3,568).
- Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, was the leading cause of death for females in 2020, accounting for 12 per cent of female deaths. Women make up 61 per cent of people living with dementia.
- Coronary heart disease is the second leading cause of death for women, yet women are likely to have less recognised or atypical symptoms of coronary heart disease.
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in women, followed by breast cancer.
 - Women are more likely to have asymptomatic presentations and experience a wider range of types of lung cancer than men, which can lead to women being under-diagnosed or misdiagnosed.
- Women at all stages of life are at greater risk than men of mental ill health. Women experience common mental health disorders such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety at two to three times the rate of men.
 - While women are more likely to intentionally self-harm, men have higher rates of suicide than women. In 2020, there were 2,384 suicide deaths of men (18.6 per 100,000 population) and 755 suicide deaths of women (5.8 per 100,000 population).¹⁵

¹³ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-conditions-disability-deaths/life-expectancy-deaths/overview>

¹⁴ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/life-expectancy-death/deaths-in-australia/contents/leading-causes-of-death>

¹⁵ [Suicide and intentional self-harm - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/life-expectancy-death/deaths-in-australia/contents/leading-causes-of-death) accessed 10 November 2022.

Date: 22 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Rochelle White
Branch/Section: SPIE/HJOS
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Department of Health and Aged Care.

Women's Safety

Subject/Issue

Women in Australia continue to be disproportionately impacted by family, domestic and sexual violence.

Key points

OFW Role

- The Office for Women (OFW) provide advice on women's safety policy and funding through Budget processes, including supporting gender analysis and advice, and whole of government coordination.
 - This is done through working in close collaboration with DSS and other relevant agencies, including AGD and education.
- OFW provides secretariat support to the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council, which supports the implementation of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan).
- OFW is developing the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (National Strategy) which will complement other Government efforts to support gender equality, including the National Plan.
 - Achieving gender equality is essential to ending gender-based violence, as gender inequality is a key driver of violence against women.

National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032

- On 17 October 2022, the Commonwealth, state and territory governments launched the National Plan which sets out the policy agenda for addressing violence against women and children in Australia for the next 10 years.
- On 16 August 2023, to set the roadmap for achieving the vision of the National Plan, the Australian Government launched:
 - The First Action Plan 2023-2027;
 - The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025;
 - The Outcomes Framework; and
 - The National Plan Theory of Change
- The Government has invested a record **\$2.29 billion** towards achieving the outcomes of the National Plan across the two most recent Budgets, with

\$589.3 million provided in the 2023-24 Budget to support implementation of the Action Plans (*refer to [Attachment A](#) for more details*).

Action Plans and Outcomes Framework

First Action Plan

- The First Action Plan **2023-2027** outlines investments and efforts across the Commonwealth, state and territory governments over the first five years of the National Plan.
- Through the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government invested \$589.3 million over 5 years from 2022-23 towards actions which will deliver on the objectives of the National Plan, including:
 - \$159.0 million over two years for the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses with state and territory governments.
 - \$12.1 million for primary prevention initiatives including community-led sexual violence prevention pilots and Teach Us Consent to develop resources for young people about sexual violence and consent.
 - \$8.5 million for early intervention initiatives including developing a perpetrator risk assessment framework, funding the Mensline Changing for Good Service and developing a national perpetrator referral database.
- The Government is also supporting women's safety through investing a further \$57.3 million to implement Set the Standard, and \$134.1 million over 4 years (and \$33.7 million per year in ongoing funding) for the Office of the eSafety Commissioner.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan

- The dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan **2023-2025** outlines actions to address the disproportionate rates of family violence experienced by First Nations women.
 - For example First Nations Women were 34 times more likely to be hospitalised from domestic violence than other Australian women.¹
- The Action Plan was developed by Government in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual Violence.

¹ [AIHW, Family, domestic and sexual violence data in Australia Report, November 2022](#)

- In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government provided \$262.6 million for First Nations family safety initiatives under the Action Plan, including:
 - \$194 million to implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan; and
 - \$68.6 million to support National Family Violence Prevention Legal Service providers across Australia.
- The Australian Government is also committed to developing a standalone First Nations National Plan to address the unacceptably high rates of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
 - As part of the \$194 million provided in the 2023-24 Budget, the Government committed \$7.8 million over five years to support the development of the standalone First Nations National Plan.
- The First Nations National Plan will be developed through a comprehensive, consultative process that supports genuine partnership and shared decision-making with First Nations communities.
 - Department of Social Services opened an EOI process for the Steering Committee, which closed on the 28 August 2023.

Outcomes Framework

- The Outcomes Framework, released alongside the Action Plans, outlines outcomes and measurable targets that will support monitoring of progress over the life of the National Plan.
- The Outcomes Framework includes, for the first time, six national level targets agreed to by Commonwealth, states and territories. The targets include:
 1. 25 per cent annual reduction in female victims of intimate partner homicide²
 2. Two point increase in the mean Understanding of Violence against Women Scale of the NCAS³ every four years, indicating an increase in knowledge of behaviours that constitute family, domestic and sexual violence
 3. Two point increase in the mean Attitude towards Violence against Women Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that condemn violence against women

² Measured by the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) annual Homicide in Australia report.

³ Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) runs the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) every four years. The most recent NCAS was conducted in 2021. The NCAS collects information on community understanding of violence against women and their attitudes towards violence.

4. Two point increase in the mean Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that reject gender inequality
 5. Two point increase in the mean Sexual Violence Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that reject sexual violence
 6. Closing the Gap Target 13: by 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero.⁴
- These targets will be measured through a Performance Measurement Plan and Evaluation Strategy that are under development, with additional targets to be identified as more data becomes available.
 - The Performance Measurement Plan will be in place in early 2024, with the overarching Evaluation Strategy being released in mid-2024.

Further questions should be directed to the Social Services Portfolio.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

- On 1 July 2022, the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission was established as an Executive Agency with an interim Commissioner.
- On 1 November 2022, Ms Micaela Cronin was appointed as the inaugural Commissioner for a 5-year term.
- The Commission's role is to provide evidence-based policy advice to Government, promote coordination across jurisdictions, track progress of the National Plan, and amplify the voices of people with lived experience.
 - The Commission's first annual report to Parliament on progress towards the objectives of the National Plan will be in mid-2024.⁵
- The Commission is establishing a Lived Experience Advisory Council to embed the voice of people with experience of domestic, family and sexual violence in policy at the national level.

Further questions should be directed to the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission/Social Services Portfolio.

⁴ The Outcomes Framework notes that, at present, there is no appropriate data source available to measure Closing the Gap Target 13. The NCAS and AIC Homicide in Australia report are being investigated as to their appropriateness as a data source.

⁵ The DFSV Commission plans to release a public interim statement in late 2023. The first report to Parliament will be released 12 months after the release of the Action Plans (16 August 2023).

Family and domestic violence leave

- The Fair Work Amendment (Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave) Bill 2022 was passed by parliament on 27 October 2022. The legislation provides 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards for employees covered by the Fair Work Act.
- This reform commenced on 1 February 2023 for employees of non-small businesses, and 1 August 2023 for employees of small businesses (fewer than 15 employees). In the October 2022-23 Budget, \$3.4 million was provided to:
 - educate and support small businesses with implementation; and
 - fund an independent review from February 2024 which will use quantitative and qualitative data to measure and report on the impact on small business, sole traders, and victims of family and domestic violence.
- There is no data available on uptake/usage of these provisions
 - A review is due to be undertaken in February 2024

Further questions should be directed to the Employment and Workplace Relations portfolio.

Sexual Violence

- Ensuring the justice system responds to the needs of victim survivors of sexual violence is a priority of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children.
- The Government is leading national efforts to improve the way the justice system deals with sexual violence
 - including by partnering with states and territories to harmonise laws relating to sexual assault and consent.

National Roundtable on Justice Responses to Sexual Violence

- On 23 August the Government held a National Roundtable on Justice Responses to Sexual Violence, chaired by the Attorney-General. The roundtable was part of the 2023-24 Federal Budget investment of \$14.7 million to strengthen how the criminal justice system responds to sexual assault and prevent further harm to victims through the justice process.
 - The roundtable will inform the terms of reference of the upcoming review by the Australian Law Reform Commission.

- Minister Gallagher attended and addressed the roundtable, along with Minister Rishworth and the Attorney-General.
 - OFW engaged with the Attorney-General's Department on preparations for the roundtable and the drafting of a joint media release.

National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence

- The Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG) released the National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence (National Principles) on 22 September 2023.
 - The National Principles will inform more effective responses to family and domestic violence, and promote more consistent and safer outcomes for victim-survivors.
- The 7 National Principles focus on:
 - A shared understanding of the common features of coercive control
 - Understanding the traumatic and pervasive impacts of coercive control
 - Taking an intersectional approach to understanding features and impacts
 - Improving societal understanding of coercive control
 - Embedding lived experience
 - Coordinating and designing approaches across prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing
 - Embedding the National Principles in legal responses to coercive control.
- The National Principles are accompanied by a range of supporting resources, available on the Australian Attorney-General's Department's website.
 - These are designed to be used by government and non-government organisations involved in addressing coercive control.

Further questions should be directed to the Attorney-General's Portfolio.

Family Law Reform

- The Government is in the process of undertaking a suite of reforms to Australian family law.
- OFW has engaged regularly with the Attorney-General's Department on the proposed reforms, including providing a gender analysis.
- The first tranche of reforms, the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023, is currently before the Senate.
- The Bill proposes amendments to the Family Law Act 1975 to ensure that parenting orders are made in the best interests of the child.
 - This includes repealing the presumption of 'equal shared parental responsibility' and associated requirements for courts to consider specific care time arrangements.
 - Recent inquiries have found these factors often cause prolonged litigation and conflict, exacerbating issues related to domestic and family violence.
- On 24 August 2023, the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee released their report on the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023.
 - The report makes nine substantive recommendations, including for an education campaign to ensure the reforms are understood by separating families.
- Public consultations on the exposure draft of the Family Law Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023 are open until 10 November (since 18 September).
 - This bill includes reform to management of property settlement to take domestic violence into account, simplify decision-making principles and enhancing powers and duties in property and financial matters.

Further questions should be directed to the Attorney-General's Portfolio.

Key facts and figures

- More than 1 in 2 women (53 per cent) and 1 in 4 men (25 per cent) have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime.ⁱ
 - In 2021-22, 1.3 million women (13 per cent) and 427,000 men (4.5 per cent) experienced sexual harassment.ⁱⁱ
- 1 in 4 women (23 per cent or 2.3 million) and 1 in 14 men (7.3 per cent or 693,000) have experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime.ⁱⁱⁱ
- In women's most recent sexual assault by a male, the perpetrator was most often an intimate partner (53 per cent) and the incident most often occurred in a home (69 per cent).^{iv}
- In the 12 months after an assault, two-thirds of women experienced anxiety or fear for their personal safety, and one in nine had to take time off work.^v
- 2 in 5 women (39 per cent) and 2 in 5 men (42 per cent) have experienced violence since the age of 15.^{vi}
 - 1 in 5 women (22 per cent) and 1 in 16 men (6.1 per cent) experienced sexual violence.
 - 1 in 3 women (31 per cent) and 2 in 5 men (42 per cent) experienced physical violence.
 - Men are more likely to experience physical assault by a stranger (57 per cent) in a location outside the home, like a pub, bar or in the street (74 per cent).^{vii}
 - Women are more likely to experience physical assault by an intimate partner (63 per cent) while at home (70 per cent).^{viii}
- On average, 1 woman is killed by a partner every 14 days.^{ix}
- 59.7 per cent of single mothers have experienced intimate partner violence.^x
- 25 per cent of women who wanted to leave a violent partner were unable to due to a lack of financial support^{xi} and 15 per cent of women who returned to a violent partner did so because they had no money or nowhere else to go.^{xii}
- Indigenous women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised for family violence than non-Indigenous women.^{xiii}

Homicides

- On average, one women is killed by an intimate partner every 14 days.⁶
 - This figure has been updated based on data from the Australian Institute of Criminology's Homicide in Australia Statistical Report 2020-21, which found that on average, one woman dies every 14 days at the hands of a former or current partner.
 - The previous figure from the Homicide in Australia Statistical Report 2019-20 found that on average one woman died every 10 days.
 - While any reduction is positive, it does not detract from the overall impact and scale of violence against women. A sustained and united effort is still required to end violence.
- According to Destroy the Joint, as at 6 October 2023, 38 women have reportedly lost their lives in Australia in 2023 due to violence against women (equivalent to approximately one woman every 7 days).⁷
 - 57 women reportedly lost their lives in 2022 (equivalent to approximately one woman every 7 days).⁸

Note that the Destroy the Joint figures should be used with caution, as it represents an unofficial count from a grassroots organisation.

If asked: What is the difference between the AIC and Destroy the Joint homicide figures?

- OFW refers to both Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) data and the Destroy the Joint figures to track the number of women killed by violence. These sources provide retrospective national data from government sources, as well as real time tracking of homicide incidents.
 - The AIC and Destroy the Joint figures use different definitions of homicide.
- The AIC figure of one woman killed every 14 days has been calculated using the AIC's Statistical Report which measures homicide incidents recorded by Australian state and territory police between 1 July 2020 and

⁶ [AIC Homicide in Australia 2020-21](#). This figure is based on AIC's 2020-21 statistics (25 women killed). This is a reduction from the 2019-20 figure of one death every 10 days (36 women killed). These financial-year figures represent reported intimate partner homicides and may appear to vary from the running tally provided by Destroy the Joint, which are calculated based on the current calendar year and a broader definition of violence beyond intimate partner violence.

⁷ [Destroy the Joint, Twitter](#) as at 6 October 2023. This figure is a running tally for the 2023 calendar year. Destroy the Joint is a non-for-profit, online Australian feminist group who are active on X (formerly known as Twitter) and Facebook, who count the number of women in Australia who have died due to violence each year.

⁸ [Destroy the Joint, Twitter](#). This figure is calculated on based on the 2022 calendar year.

30 June 2021. This figure measures homicides perpetrated by current or former intimate partners.

- Destroy The Joint tracks the number of women killed in Australia in real time. The figure measures deaths due to violence against women in Australia, which is broader than intimate partner violence.
- While across both data sources, the figures show that the number of women killed by violence has been declining in recent years, OFW considers any homicide unacceptable.

Date:	20 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Social Policy and International Engagement Branch
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	DSS, AGD, DEWR and DFSV Commission

Women's Safety

Attachment A: Women's safety measures in 2023-24 Budget

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>Total \$(m)</u>	<u>WBS pg#</u>	<u>BP2 pg#</u>
Funding for First Nations women's safety (\$262.6 million)					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan	\$145.3m over four years, including a provision of \$128.6m in the Contingency Reserve, to support activities which address immediate safety concerns for First Nations women and children	DSS	\$194.0	48	90
	\$17.6m to deliver family safety initiatives under the Action Plan	NIAA		48	90
	\$23.2m to deliver 7 place-based, trauma-aware and culturally responsive healing programs to support families	NIAA		48	90
	\$7.8m to support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan for Family Safety	DSS		48	90
National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services	Funding over two years to support the National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services providers to deliver legal and non-legal support to women and children experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence.	NIAA	\$68.6	48	90
Funding for the First Action Plan (\$326.7 million)					
National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses	\$159.0m over 2 years from 2023-24 for the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses with state and territory governments.	DSS	\$326.7	54	88
Escaping Violence Payment	\$38.2m to extend financial support for those on the Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot to January 2025.	DSS		51	88
Family Law Priority Property Pool program	\$33.1m to provide a national expansion of the 'Priority Property Pools' program (PPP500).	AGD		53	88
Support for Trafficked People Program	\$24.3m to enhance support provided by the Support for Trafficked People Program (STPP) for victim-survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery	DSS		54	88
Improving the safety of women and children in child abduction cases	\$18.4m to make Australia's implementation of international child abduction matters under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction safer for women and children fleeing violence.	AGD		53	89
Lawyer-Assisted Family Law Property Mediation	\$13.4m to continue a lawyer-assisted family law property mediation service which provides legal advice and mediation to help separated couples reach agreement about disputes involving small property pools.	AGD		53	89
Sexual violence prevention initiatives	\$12.1m for primary prevention initiatives including community led sexual violence prevention pilots and Teach Us Consent to develop resources for young people aged 16 and over on sexual violence and consent	DSS		50	89
Family Violence Provisions and Establishing an Enduring Visa Support Capability	\$10.0m to expand the Family Violence Provisions to more visa subclasses and extend the funding for the Department of Home Affairs' specialised visa support service for temporary visa holders experiencing domestic and family violence	Home Affairs		51	89
Early intervention initiatives	\$8.5m for early intervention initiatives including developing a perpetrator risk assessment framework, funding the Mensline Changing for Good Service and developing a national perpetrator referral database	DSS		54	89
Strengthening and Harmonising Sexual Assault and Consent Laws	\$6.5m to hold a ministerial level national roundtable to inform the terms of reference for a new Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry into criminal justice responses to sexual violence.	AGD		50	89
National Model of Care	\$3.3m to develop a National Model of Care for children who present to emergency accommodation as a result of family and domestic violence and evaluate 1800RESPECT, the national counselling and support service for anyone affected by family, domestic and sexual violence.	DSS		54	89
Total			\$589.3		

ⁱ ABS, [Sexual Harassment, 2016](#). Released 7 December 2021. Note that lifetime sexual harassment rates are only available from the 2016 Personal Safety Survey

ⁱⁱ ABS, [Sexual harassment, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023

ⁱⁱⁱ ABS, [Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22](#). Released 15 March 2023

^{iv} ABS, [Sexual harassment, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023

^v ABS, [Sexual harassment, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023

^{vi} ABS, [Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22](#). Released 15 March 2023

^{vii} ABS, [Physical violence, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023

^{viii} ABS, [Physical violence, 2021-22](#). Released 23 August 2023

^{ix} Calculated using Bricknell S 2023. *Homicide in Australia 2020-21*. Statistical Report no. 42. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.52922/sr78979>

^x Summers, *The choice: Violence or poverty*, 2022. Based on data from the Personal Safety Survey

^{xi} ABS, *Partner Violence – In Focus: Crime and Justice Statistics*. Released 28 January 2020

^{xii} Summers, *The choice: Violence or poverty*, 2022. Based on data from the Personal Safety Survey

^{xiii} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story*, cat no. FDV 3 (2019) 213

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women

Subject/Issue

Culturally and linguistically diverse women experience specific abuse risks, compounding forms of discrimination, and barriers accessing services and supports.

Key points

- Office for Women seeks to ensure the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse women are considered in policy design and implementation.
- Under the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP), OFW has provided \$865,552 over 2021-22 to 2023-24 for the Harmony Alliance to bring forward the important views, issues and concerns of women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.
- The Australian Government has appointed a three-person panel to conduct a Multicultural Framework Review to consider the institutional, legislative and policy settings to build Australia's multiculturalism over the next decade.

Safety

- Women from culturally diverse backgrounds, including migrant and refugee women, experience distinct forms of gender-based violence, including migration-related abuse, dowry abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and trafficking.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse women may experience "racialised" forms of gendered violence and discrimination, where racism and racial stereotypes intersect with gender stereotypes and inequality.
 - For example, sexual harassment can include sexual comments related to the woman's race or imply that people of a certain culture have certain sexual characteristics.
- The *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* recognises that women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and migrant and refugee women face specific challenges in relation to family, domestic and sexual violence.
 - The National Plan highlights the need for tailored, culturally appropriate services and supports for diverse communities, including for men who seek to address their use of violence.

- Harmony Alliance chair Nyadol Nyuon is a member of the National Plan Advisory Group (NPAG) to represent the views of migrant and refugee women.
- A recent ANROWS report found 46% of respondents had experienced at least one form of workplace sexual harassment in the last five years in Australia.¹
 - This compares to the fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces (2022) which found 41% of women whose main language was English had experienced workplace sexual harassment in Australia in the last five years.
 - The Australian Human Rights Commission report found no significant difference in the prevalence of workplace harassment experienced by CALD women compared to women who speak mainly English at home². However it also acknowledged limitations in its survey.³

Women on temporary visas

- Women on temporary visas, including international students and working holiday visa holders, are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to their visa status, visa employment conditions, and reliance on their visa sponsor.
- Temporary visa holders have specific experiences in relation to family and domestic violence, including perpetrators using a women's visa status to control and abuse them.
 - Women on temporary visas experiencing violence or exploitation may avoid seeking support services due to fears that it will affect their ability to stay in Australia.
- Women on temporary visas who are escaping violence may access the *Temporary Visa Holder Experiencing Violence Pilot* payment, which provides eligible temporary visa holders⁴ with financial assistance and access to legal assistance and migration support.
 - In July 2023, the Government announced \$4.4 million over two years to increase to the financial assistance available to temporary

¹ ANROWS (2023) Migrant and refugee women in Australia - A study of sexual harassment in the workplace.

² There was a very slight difference in rates between women whose main language spoken at home was not English and women whose main language was English: 40%, compared to 41% of women whose main language was English.

³ The Australian Human Rights Commission report noted this result may have been affected by the accessibility of the survey (which was in English only), a reluctance for people to report due to insecure visa status or work contracts, and the lack of knowledge of workplace rights or awareness around what constitutes sexual harassment. The report assessed cultural and linguistic diversity through participants' main language spoken at home and birth country.

⁴ Eligibility: Women living in Australia who hold a temporary visa or have uncertain visa status (including a bridging visa or no visa), are experiencing family or domestic violence and are experiencing financial hardship.

visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence, from \$3000 to \$5000.⁵

- This brings the financial assistance in line with the Escaping Violence Payment, and is expected to assist up to 2000 people over two years.
- The 2023-24 Budget provided targeted support for women on temporary visas, including:
 - \$38.2 million to extend the *Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot* and the *Escaping Violence Payment* (available to citizens and residents) to January 2025.
 - \$10 million over 4 years to expand the Family Violence Provisions in the *Migration Regulations 1994* to most permanent visa subclasses. The provisions are now available to secondary applicants of most permanent visas as well as applicants for offshore temporary Partner visas and Prospective Marriage visa holders.
 - OFW engaged on the design of these measures through the Budget process.

Further questions on the payment should be directed to DSS

- The *Migration Regulations 1994* contain family violence provisions which allow holders of some subclasses of visa to be granted permanent residence if their relationship has broken down and they have suffered domestic or family violence (DFV) perpetrated by the sponsor.
 - The provisions exist to avoid a situation where a visa applicant feels compelled to remain in a violent relationship for fear of losing their eligibility for permanent residence.
 - The Government has also amended the *Migration Regulations 1994* to ease the 'non-judicial' evidence required to access the Family Violence Provisions (effective from 31 March 2023).

Further questions on these reforms should be directed to Home Affairs

- [To include par on Migration Strategy once it is released]

Modern slavery and forced marriage

- The majority of victim-survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking, including forced marriage, are women and girls.
- The 2023-24 Budget provided \$24.3 million over four years (and \$5.9 million per year ongoing) to pilot an additional referral pathway for the Support for

⁵ [Increasing financial support for visa holders experiencing violence | Department of Social Services Ministers \(dss.gov.au\)](https://www.dss.gov.au/increasing-financial-support-for-visa-holders-experiencing-violence)

Trafficked People Program to restructure the program to better meet the needs of victim-survivors and address current and projected demand.

- Australia's response to forced marriage forms part of the Australian Government's strategy to combat serious forms of exploitation, including human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices such as servitude and forced labour.
- The Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* contains offences regarding forced marriage.

Further questions on modern slavery and forced marriage should be directed to the Attorney General's portfolio.

Dowry abuse

- Dowry is a legitimate cultural practice in some communities. However, dowry abuse can be a form of family violence and may be an indicator of forced marriage.
- Dowry abuse is an act of violence, abuse and/or threats linked with giving or receiving dowry before, during or after the marriage.
- In February 2019, the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee published its report on its inquiry into the 'Practice of dowry and the incidence of dowry abuse in Australia'.
 - The 12 recommendations in the report relate to the policy responsibilities of the Attorney-General, the Minister for Social Services and Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs.
 - The Attorney-General's Department is currently working to co-ordinate a whole of Government response to the report.
 - OFW has contributed to this during the drafting and review process.

Further questions should be referred to the Attorney-General's Department

- A 2022 study in NSW found more than 15 per cent of South Asian women born in Australia and overseas who reported domestic and family violence were also affected by dowry abuse.⁶
 - The study identified 49 cases of dowry abuse among 294 case files from local domestic and family violence services (16% of cases).
 - The majority of victim-survivors (56%) were on a spouse visa and, at the time they sought help, 51% were unemployed and 10% did not have work rights.

⁶ ['Dowry Abuse and South Asian Populations in Australia'](#), 2022, City of Parramatta and Western Sydney University with Settlement Services International and the Indian Crisis & Support Agency.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

- The 2022-23 March Budget allocated \$1.7 million over three years through the Department of Health and Aged Care to support community-led prevention approaches, establish a community of practice for health professionals and support health workforce training to help address the health impacts of FGM/C.

Further questions on the contracts should be directed to Department of Health

- Under the WLDP, OFW has funded the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health since 2017-18 (over two WLDP grants rounds) to deliver the National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness (NETFA) project.
 - The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health is currently funded \$773,193 over 2020-21 to 2023-24 to deliver the Communities Leading Change program, an expansion of the previously-funded NETFA project.

Health

- The *National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030* includes culturally and linguistically diverse women as a key cohort.
 - This recognises that migrant and refugee women experience a range of poorer health outcomes, including poorer maternal and child health outcomes, due to a range of language and cultural barriers.
- Women on temporary visas may face cost barriers to accessing health care, including out-of-pocket costs for contraception, as most temporary visa holders are not eligible for Medicare.⁷

Women' Leadership and Development Program

- Up to \$30,226,923 over 2020-21 to 2026-27 has been committed to support women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through the WLDP. This includes:
 - \$3,279,542 over 2022-23 to 2025-26 for the Realise.Inspire.Support.Energise (RISE) project delivered by Diversity Council Australia.
 - The project seeks to address the systemic barriers that restrict culturally and linguistically diverse women's mobility into leadership roles in Australian organisations.

⁷ Exempt (eligible) visa classes include Temporary Protection Visas: [Enrolling in Medicare if you're a temporary resident covered by a Ministerial Order - Medicare - Services Australia](#)

- \$865,552 over 2021-22 to 2023-24 for the Harmony Alliance to bring forward the important views, issues and concerns of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- 31 WLDP projects support culturally and linguistically diverse women:

Projects <u>specifically tailored</u> for CALD and Migrant Backgrounds (15 grants)	Projects designed for <u>multiple diverse cohorts</u> incl. CALD and Migrant (16 grants)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active Refugee and Migrant Integration in Australia - \$300,000 2. Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights - \$580,000 3. Centre for Multicultural Youth - \$620,000 4. Community Corporate - \$660,000 5. Diversity Council Australia - \$3,279,542 6. Flightdeck Crewing - \$772,400 7. Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre - \$736,346 8. Multicultural Centre for Women's Health - \$779,193 9. The Muslim Women's Support Centre of WA - \$625,020 10. Relationships Australia Tasmania - \$1,232,150 11. The Social Outfit - \$240,000 12. Support Asian Women's Friendship Association - \$22,740 13. Multicultural Families Organisation - \$281,416 14. Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre - \$879,586 15. Social Policy Group (formerly known as Migration Council Australia) - Harmony Alliance - \$865,552 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Accessible Arts - \$355,600 17. Australian Institute of Company Directors - \$773,804 18. Business and Professional Women's Association Darwin - \$45,000 19. Global Sisters - \$3,000,000 20. Habitat for Humanity Australia - \$788,458 21. Inventorium - \$608,700 22. Jordan River Service - \$381,969 23. Medical Research Commercialisation Fund - \$945,602 24. The Centre for Women & Co - \$699,000 25. Whittlesea - \$358,075 26. Western Sydney Women - \$400,000* 27. Women in Seafood Australasia - \$3,362,000 28. Women and Girls Emergency Centre - \$535,780 29. Southcare - \$473,490 30. Women for Election Australia - \$5,000,000 31. YFS - \$625,500 <p>* This grant has ended, but we have not removed as the dot point above covers all funding committed over the period 2020-21 to 2026-27.</p>
Total: \$11,873,945	Total: \$18,352,978

Snapshots

Workforce Participation, Skills and Employment

- *Migrant women have lower employment participation rates than migrant men, and have higher unemployment rates than migrant men and Australian citizens.⁸*
 - *75% of migrant women with a qualification were employed in 2018-19 compared with 89% of migrant men.⁹*
 - *28% of migrant women were not in the labour force compared to 13% of migrant men.*
- *Labour market outcomes for migrant and refugee women improve the longer they reside in Australia, but persistent barriers may prevent them achieving their full economic potential, including employment at a level commensurate with their pre-migration skills and experience.¹⁰*
- *36% of women employed in the health care and social assistance sector are born overseas.¹¹*

Health and Safety

- *Migrant and refugee women may have poorer health literacy and experience a range of poorer mental and physical health outcomes, including higher rates of stillbirths.¹²*
- *The 2021 Migrant and Refugee Women in Australia Safety and Security Survey¹³ found temporary visas holders reported the highest levels of family and domestic violence among respondents, including controlling behaviours, and physical or sexual violence.*
 - *The survey of 1400 migrant and refugee women aged 18+ (by Monash University in partnership with Harmony Alliance) found 33% had experienced some form of family and domestic violence.*
 - *This compares to 27% of women in the general population who have experienced intimate partner or family violence since the age of 15.¹⁴*
 - *Of the migrant and refugee women who had experienced FDV, 40% were temporary visa holders and 28% had a permanent visa.*

⁸ Characteristics of Recent Migrants, ABS, as at November 2019, released 12 June 2020.

⁹ Qualifications and work, ABS, 2018-19 financial year, released Sept 2020.

¹⁰ [Unlocking Potential: Addressing the economic participation of migrant & refugee women in Australia - Settlement Services International](#)

¹¹ 2021 Census, ABS, released June 2022.

¹² [Submission to the Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education – Multicultural Centre For Women's Health \(mcwh.com.au\)](#)

¹³ Seagrave et al (2021). [Migrant and refugee women in Australia: The safety and security study](#). Monash University.

¹⁴ [Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)

Leadership

- *The Diversity Council of Australia's 2023 report 'Culturally and Racially Marginalised Women in Leadership' found:*
 - *65% of the women surveyed agreed Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) women employees received fewer opportunities for career advancements than other women.*
 - *75% reported that others assumed they worked in a lower status job than they did and treated them as such.*
 - *65% felt they were ignored or not taken seriously by their managers because of being a CARM woman.*
- *The Australian Human Rights Commission's 2018 report 'Leading for Change' noted there was only a "very small number" of female leaders in the public and private sectors with a non-Anglo-Celtic background, and "women of culturally diverse backgrounds ... cop a 'double whammy' when it comes to leadership".¹⁵*

¹⁵ [Leading for Change: A Blueprint for Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Leadership Revisited \(2018\)](#)

Cohort data snapshot – Older women

Subject/Issue

Older women¹ in Australia experience disproportionately worse outcomes in employment, pay equity, health and safety, and leadership compared to older men and younger people.

Key points

Workforce participation, education, skills and employment

- Older women's (55+ years) workforce participation rate is 31.7 per cent, compared to 42.4 per cent for older men.²
 - Older women's (55+ years) unemployment rate is 2.9 per cent, while older men's is 2.5 per cent.³
 - Older women's (55+ years) underemployment rate is 5.4 per cent, while older men's is 4.0 per cent.³
- In 2021, 27.5 per cent of employed women aged 55 years and older were working in the Health care and social assistance industry, compared to 7.3 per cent of employed men aged 55 years and older.⁴
- In 2021, 66.3 per cent of people over 55 years old who provided unpaid care for children other than their own children were women, and 33.7 per cent were men.⁵

Pay equity

- The gender pay gap increases with age. In June 2022, the gender pay gap was:
 - 31.9 per cent for employees aged 55-64,
 - 25.3 per cent for employees 65 years and older and,
 - 2.5 per cent for employees under 24 years old.⁶
- The gap in median superannuation balances for those approaching retirement (ages 60-64) is 25.1 per cent. This translates to median superannuation balances for this age range of \$212k for men and \$159k for women.⁷
- In 2020-21, 34 per cent of retired women relied on their partner's income to meet their living costs at retirement (compared to 7 per cent of retired men).⁸
 - 55.5 per cent of Age Pension recipients (67+ years) are women.⁹

Health and safety

- In June 2020, over half (53 per cent) of older Australians (aged 65 and over) were women.¹⁰

- In 2021, older women (28.6 per cent) were more likely than older men (18.0 per cent) to report arthritis as a long-term health condition.¹¹
- Most women reach menopause between 45-55 years of age, though the average age for women in Australia is 51-52 years.¹²
 - Menopause can be a significant cause of ill health for women, which can lead to long-term absences from work or force them into early retirement.
 - The Office for Women is working across government to better understand this issue, including the level of data and evidence available
- Older women (55+ years) were the fastest growing demographic cohort experiencing homelessness between 2011 and 2016, increasing by 31 per cent.¹³
 - In 2021, older women had a homelessness rate of 19 per 10,000, down from 20 per 10,000 in 2016.¹⁴

Leadership

- The gender managerial gap widens with age. In 2021, of all employees aged 55 years and over, 5.6 per cent were female managers, while 11.4 per cent were male managers.
 - Of all employed 15-24 year olds, 1.8 per cent were female managers and 1.8 per cent were male managers.¹⁵
- This is in part due to low female representation in CEO pipeline roles and decreased flexibility of management roles.¹⁶
 - For CEO management positions, most pipeline roles are held by men (82 per cent in 2023).¹⁷
 - In 2021, most (77.9 per cent) managers worked full-time. 50.5 per cent of full-time managers were male and 27.4 per cent were female.¹⁸

Date:	19/10/2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Evidence
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

¹ “Older women” refers to women 55 years and over where possible in line general definitions of mature age employment in labour market data analysis. Alternatively some data sources define “older women” as women over 65 years old; this definition is used where data for women aged 55 years and over is not available.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Labour Force, Australia, August 2023](#), Table 1, Table 22, accessed 14 September 2023

³ ABS, [Labour Force, Australia, August 2023](#), Table 22, accessed 14 September 2023

⁴ ABS, [2021 Census of Population and Housing \[TableBuilder\]](#), accessed 2 October 2023

⁵ ABS, [2021 Census of Population and Housing \[TableBuilder\]](#), accessed 2 October 2023

⁶ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), [Wages and Ages: Mapping the Gender Pay Gap by Age](#), released 27 June 2022, accessed 2 October 2023

⁷ Australian Taxation Office (ATO), [Taxation statistics 2020-21, Snapshot Table 5, Chart 12](#), accessed 24 August 2023

⁸ ABS, [Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia, 2020-21](#), accessed 2 October 2023

⁹ Department of Social Services (DSS), [Expanded DSS Benefit and Payment Recipient Demographics – June 2023](#), accessed 2 October 2023

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), [Older Australians, Age](#), released 28 June 2023, accessed 3 October 2023

¹¹ ABS, [2021 Census of Population and Housing \[TableBuilder\]](#), accessed 11 October 2023

¹² Jean Hailes for Women’s Health (2019), [Understanding menopause](#), accessed 11 October 2023

¹³ ABS, [Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016](#), accessed 3 October 2023

¹⁴ ABS, [Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2021](#), accessed 3 October 2023

¹⁵ ABS, [2021 Census of Population and Housing \[TableBuilder\]](#), accessed 2 October 2023

¹⁶ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), [Wages and Ages: Mapping the Gender Pay Gap by Age](#), released 27 June 2022, accessed 2 October 2023

¹⁷ Chief Executive Women (CEW), [2023 Senior Executive Census](#), released 6 September 2023, accessed 11 October 2023

¹⁸ ABS, [2021 Census of Population and Housing \[TableBuilder\]](#), accessed 11 October 2023

Cohort data snapshot – Women with disability**Subject/Issue**

Women with disability in Australia experience disproportionately worse outcomes in employment, pay equity, health and safety, and leadership compared to women without disability.

Key points***Workforce participation, education, skills and employment (most recent data at 2018)***

- Women with disability are less likely to work, with 50.7 per cent of women with disability aged 15-64 years participating in the workforce, compared to 79.7 per cent of women without disability.¹
- Women with disability work less hours, with 46 per cent of working-age (15-64 years) women with disability working full-time, compared to 72 per cent of working-age men with disability.²
 - 54 per cent of working-age women with disability worked part-time, compared with 28 per cent of working-age men with disability.³
- 25.6 per cent of female school students who attend regular classes in mainstream schools have an unmet need for support.⁴

Pay equity (most recent data at 2018)

- The median weekly income gap between men and women aged 15-64 with disability was 4.8 per cent (\$25 per week).⁵
 - The median weekly total earnings for women with disability was \$500 and for men with disability was \$525.
- The median weekly income gap between women aged 15-64 with and without disability was 42.1 per cent (\$363).⁶
 - The median weekly total earnings for women with disability was \$500 and for women without disability was \$863.⁷

Health and safety

- Women with disability are more likely to have experienced violence since the age of 15 (46 per cent) than women without disability (33 per cent).⁸
- In 2021, women with disability were more likely to have experienced sexual violence in the last 2 years (4 per cent) compared to women without disability (2.5 per cent).⁹
- Women with disability are more likely to rate their health as poorer than women without disability

- The most recent data from 2017-18 shows that women with disability (40 per cent) are around 7 times more likely than women without disability (6 per cent) to assess their health as fair or poor.¹⁰
- Chronic conditions are the leading cause of illness, disability and death in Australia. 41.3 per cent of women with 1 of 8 selected chronic health conditions (including coronary heart disease, diabetes and asthma) have disability, compared with 37.6 per cent of men.¹¹
- Women with disability (32 per cent) are more than 3 times more likely to experience high or very high levels of psychological distress as women without disability (9.2 per cent).
 - Men with disability (31 per cent) are almost 5 times more likely to experience high or very high levels of psychological distress as women without disability (6.8 per cent).¹²

Leadership (as of 2021)

- 2.9 per cent of all managers aged 15-64 years were females with a disability and 4.1 per cent were males with a disability.¹³
 - Women without disability made up 35 per cent of all managers aged 15-64 years.¹⁴

Policy responses

<p>Disability Royal Commission Final Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability</i> final report was tabled in the Australian Parliament on 29 September 2023. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Royal Commission has undertaken an expansive examination of the matters affecting the lives and experiences of Australians with disability. • The Government is carefully considering the Royal Commission's final report and its 222 recommendations. • On 29 September 2023, the Government announced \$4.45 million over two years from 2023-24 to establish a Commonwealth Disability Royal Commission Taskforce to coordinate the Australian Government's response. • Office for Women will engage with and support the Australian Government's response to ensure any accepted recommendations and associated funding, supports women and girls with disabilities.
<p>Independent Review of the NDIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) commenced in October 2022, to improve participant's experience, as well as the effectiveness and sustainability, of the scheme. • The NDIS Review is expected to be tabled by the end of November 2023. • Office for Women will engage with and support the Australian Government response to the NDIS Review. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This will contribute to the Government's commitment to gender equality by ensuring women and girls with disabilities have equal access to the scheme and supports they need. • In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government provided \$732.9 million over four years from 2023-24 to support the effective and sustainable operation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and ensure every dollar goes to those who need it most.

<p>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031</i> (the Strategy), is Australia's overarching policy framework to drive change for people with disability over the next decade. • The Strategy commenced in December 2021, with an initial investment of \$250 million over 10 years to support its implementation. • In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government made a number of additional commitments to improve the lives of Australians with disability including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$10.2 million to establish a Central Coordination of Disability Policy function in the Department of Social Services; ○ \$31.4 million over four years from 2023-24 to meet the remaining costs to establish the National Disability Data Asset incorporating gender disaggregated data; and ○ \$27.0 million over 4 years from 2023–24 to undertake additional pilots of early interventions for infants with signs of autism, and further progress the Government's election commitment to deliver a National Autism Strategy.
<p>Women's Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence. • Women with disability also experience specific forms of violence, such as abuse in institutional and service settings, forced sterilisation, seclusion and restrictive practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The diverse nature of violence experienced by women and children in a range of institutional and service settings is acknowledged in the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</i> (National Plan). • Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is a member of the National Plan Advisory Group (NPAG) and represents the views of women and girls with disability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NPAG has informed the National Plan and the recently released First Action Plan 2023-2027

	and standalone Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025.
Women's Economic Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government made a number of commitments to improve employment outcomes for people living with disability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$35 million over three years from 2023-24 for two grant rounds to support new directions in the supported employment sector. \$11.7 million over four years from 2023-24 for advocacy supports for supported employees and their families. \$6 million over three years from 2023-24 to evaluate existing supported employment initiatives, pilot job expos for supported employees and their families, and help organisations transition to the revised award. \$3.2 million over two years from 2023-24 to continue to support important services that assist employees living with disability, including the Job Access Complaints Resolution and Referral Service and the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline. \$1.1 million in 2023-24 to undertake initial research, design and consultation work in preparation for the delivery of the Government's election commitment to establish a Disability Employment Centre of Excellence.
Disability Employment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the October 2022-23 Budget, the Government provided \$19.4 million over four years to extend the Disability Employment Services (DES) program for two years (ending 30 June 2025) to provide time to develop a new specialist disability employment services model from 1 July 2025.

Date:	19/10/2023
Cleared by (SES):	Rochelle White
Branch/Section:	Evidence
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Disability and the Labour Force 2018](#), Table 3.3, released 24 July 2020, accessed 6 October 2023.

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), [People with disability in Australia, Employment rate and type](#), accessed 3 October 2023.

³ AIHW, [People with disability in Australia](#), released 5 July 2022, accessed 3 October 2023.

⁴ AIHW, [People with disability in Australia, Education participation needs and challenges supplementary data tables 2018](#), Table PTPN22, released 5 July 2022, accessed 3 October 2023.

⁵ AIHW, [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Outcomes Framework, Employment and Financial Security, Median gross income gap 2022](#), released 30 November 2022, accessed 3 October 2023.

⁶ AIHW, [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Outcomes Framework, Employment and Financial Security, Median gross income gap](#), released 20 November 2022, accessed 3 October 2023.

⁷ AIHW, [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Outcomes Framework, Employment and Financial Security, Median gross income gap](#), , released 5 July 2022, accessed 3 October 2023.

⁸ AIHW calculations using ABS data, [Experience of violence - Safety, rights and justice](#), Sex and gender, last updated 30 November 2022, accessed 12 October 2023

⁹ ABS, [Sexual violence](#), released 23 August 2023, accessed 6 October 2023

¹⁰ AIHW, [People with disability in Australia, General Health, Figure 1](#), last updated 5 July 2022, accessed 12 October 2023

¹¹ AIHW, [People with disability in Australia, Chronic conditions and disability](#), last updated 5 July 2022, accessed 11 October 2023.

¹² AIHW, [People with disability in Australia, Health status, Mental health](#), last updated 5 July 2022, accessed 11 October 2023.

¹³ ABS, [Disability, Ageing, and Carers, 2018](#) [TableBuilder], released 24 October 2019, accessed 3 October 2023.

¹⁴ ABS, [Disability, Ageing, and Carers, 2018](#) [TableBuilder], released 24 October 2019, accessed 3 October 2023.

BUDGET 2023-24
including Women's Budget Statement - overview**Subject/Issue**

The 2023-24 Women's Budget Statement (WBS) details measures that will advance gender equality.

Key points – Overview

- The Government is committed to advancing gender equality as a national priority.
- The 2023-24 Budget provided significant investments to improve women's equality, including:
 - Investments to support women experiencing the most disadvantage through increases to Parenting Payment Single, Commonwealth Rent Assistance, and other income support payments;
 - Investments to strengthen women's economic equality and help to close the gender pay gap with investments to support highly feminised workforces, and support women in male dominated sectors;
 - Initiatives to support women's safety, including \$589.3 million to support the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children; and
 - A range of measures that address gender bias in the health system and support women's sport.
- A full list of relevant Budget 2023-24 measures is at **Attachment A**.
- As part of its commitment to implement gender-responsive budgeting, 14 proposals were subject to Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) in the October 2022-23 Budget. In the May 2023-24 Budget, 12 proposals were subject to GIA, but across a wider range of portfolios.
 - From the 2023-24 MYEFO, gender-responsive budgeting will be further expanded to embed gender analysis across all budget decision-making. The Women's Budget Statement serves as the key vehicle for highlighting this gender analysis.

2023-24 Women's Budget Statement

- The 2023-24 WBS explores factors influencing women's economic equality and outlines key measures to advance gender equality in Australia focusing on:
 - Women's economic equality;
 - Ending violence against women and children;
 - Women in leadership and decision-making; and
 - Women's health and wellbeing.
- The Statement highlights reforms that target women and advance gender equality.
- The Statement also highlights how certain measures will provide a particular or disproportionate benefit for women through the use of gender impact analysis.
 - For example, women make up the majority of those who benefit from increases to wages of many aged care workers, investments to support the training and professional development of the early childhood education and care workforce, and increases to the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Speech 12 May 2023. [Future women 'Budgeting for Women's Success' federal budget dinner | Ministers Media Centre \(pmc.gov.au\)](#)
- Media Release 9 May 2023. [Labor Budget backs Australian women | Ministers Media Centre \(pmc.gov.au\)](#)

Relevant Media Reporting

- [Women's budget? We need more transparency about what this means](#), Angela Priestly, *Women's Agenda*, 10 May 2023.
- ['Good start' to gender-responsive budgeting as longer term plan prudent](#), Anna Macdonald, *The Mandarin*, 8 May 2023.
- [Federal budget: Katy Gallagher announces abolition of 'pretty punitive' ParentsNext program](#), Karen Barlow and Adrian Rollins, *The Canberra Times*, 5 May, 2023.
- [What's in the federal budget for women?](#) Chantelle Al-Khouri, *The ABC*, 10 May 2023

Date: 29 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division/Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil
PDR Number: SB23-000223
Last Printed:

LIST OF BUDGET 2023-24 COMMITMENTS

Women's Economic Equality – Cost of living Budget highlights

- The Government is making investments to support economic inclusion and provide targeted cost-of-living relief for those who are facing the greatest hardship, including:
 - \$1.9 billion over five years from 2022-23 (and \$0.5 billion per year ongoing) to expand the eligibility for the Parenting Payment (Single) to single principal carers with a youngest dependent child aged 8 to under 14 years of age.
 - This benefits around 57,000 single principal carers, including 52,000 women and 5,700 First Nations carers.¹
 - \$2.7 billion over five years from 2022-23 (and \$0.7 billion per year ongoing) to increase the maximum payment rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent for all recipients, with single women making up almost half of recipients.²
 - \$4.9 billion over five years from 2022-23 (with \$1.3 billion per year ongoing) to increase support for people receiving working age and student payments.
 - This measure increases the base rates of ABSTUDY, Austudy, Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension (Youth), JobSeeker Payment, Special Benefit, and Parenting Payment (Partnered) by \$40 per fortnight from 20 September 2023.
 - Women make up 60 per cent of ABSTUDY (Living Allowance) recipients, 56 per cent of Austudy recipients, and 59 per cent of Youth Allowance (student and apprentice) recipients. They make up 46 per cent of Disability Support Pension recipients, 50 per cent of total JobSeeker Payment recipients and 60 per cent of Special Benefit recipients.³
 - The majority of Parenting Payment (Partnered) recipients are women – making up 90 per cent of recipients.⁴ The majority of Parenting Payment (Single) recipients are also women (96 per cent).⁵

¹ Department of Social Services fact sheet as at the 2023-24 Budget: [Additional support for single parents](#).

² Commonwealth of Australia, [2023-24 Women's Budget Statement](#), at p. 17. As at the 2023-24 Budget.

³ [Department of Social Services – Expanded Benefit and Payment Recipient Demographics. As at March 2023](#).

⁴ [Ibid.](#)

⁵ [Ibid.](#)

- The Government also extended the eligibility of the higher single JobSeeker Payment to single recipients aged 55 to 59, who are on the payment for nine or more continuous months. Previously the qualifying age for this higher rate was 60 years of age.
 - Women make up 55.5 per cent of total JobSeeker recipients aged between 55 to 59 and on JobSeeker payment for 9 or more continuous months – men meeting the same criteria make up 44.5 per cent.⁶
- The Government is abolishing the ParentsNext Program from 1 July 2024 and will develop a replacement voluntary program.
 - As a first step, on 5 May 2023, compulsory aspects of ParentsNext were paused, while a replacement program is designed in consultation with stakeholders.
- The Government also invested \$1.5 billion over two years from 2023-24 to partner with states and territories to reduce the impact of rising energy prices on Australian households and businesses.
 - This flows to concession card holders and carer allowance recipients – the majority of whom are women – as well as Family Tax Benefits recipients.
 - Women make up 52.2 per cent of Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders, 63.2 per cent of Health Care Card holders, 59.6 per cent of Low Income Health Care Card holders, and 57.5 per cent of Pension Concession Card holders. Women make up 74.4 per cent of carer allowance recipients.⁷

Women's Economic Equality – workforce participation and closing the gender pay gap Budget highlights

- The Budget supported highly feminised workforces, including through:
 - \$11.3 billion over four years from 2023-24 to back a 15 per cent increase to the minimum wages of many aged care workers – over 85 per cent of whom are women – from 1 July 2023.
 - Around \$4 billion for increased funding for a range of Government and community organisations through reforms to indexation – including for organisations delivering women's safety initiatives.
 - \$91.3 million over five years from 2022-23 to boost the mental health care workforce through additional psychology placements, 80 per cent of which are women.

⁶ Department of Finance, 2023-24 May Budget Issues Brief no. 28, *Social Security and Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee*. As at the 2023-24 March Budget.

⁷ Above.

- \$72.4 million over five years from 2022-23 to build and retain the early childhood education and care workforce, 92 per cent of whom are women.
- \$67.5 million in 2023-24 to boost homelessness funding to states and territories, supporting jobs that are overwhelmingly done by women, including to assist women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.
- The Budget invested \$8.6 million over four years from 2023-24 (and \$1.5 million per year ongoing) to implement the Australian Skills Guarantee. This includes national targets for women in apprenticeships, traineeships and paid cadetships on major Australian Government funded construction and information and communications technology (ICT) projects valued at \$10 million or more.
 - Targets for women in construction will increase annually to reach 12 per cent for women in apprenticeships and traineeships and 10 per cent for women in trade apprenticeships by 2030. This will more than double participation for women in apprenticeships and traineeships, and triple participation in trade apprenticeships.
 - Targets for women in major ICT projects are to be negotiated with suppliers on a project-by-project basis.
- The Budget invested \$5.0 million over three years from 2024-25 in grant funding to organisations with appropriate expertise in supporting women in the workplace, to further support women in male-dominated trade apprenticeships.
- The Budget also extended the Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program for two years to 30 June 2027, within current program resourcing.
 - This provides new and existing participants more time to complete their science, technology, engineering and maths qualification while simultaneously continuing their careers.

Women's Safety - Budget highlights

- The Government built on a record investment of \$1.7 billion in the October 2022-23 Budget to end violence against women and children, through providing \$589.3 million for women's safety this Budget – this brings the total over the last two budgets to \$2.29 billion.
- \$326.7 million over four years from 2023-24 (and \$19.4 million per year ongoing) has been provided for activities under the First Action Plan across the priority areas of prevention, early intervention, response and recovery and healing. This includes:

- \$159.0 million over two years from 2023-24 for the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses with state and territory governments.
- \$38.2 million to extend the Escaping Violence Payment and Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot to January 2025.
- \$33.1 million over four years from 2023-24 to continue and expand the Family Law Priority Property Pool program nationally, to help separated couples achieve quick, fair and affordable settlements.
- \$24.3 million over four years from 2023-24 to pilot an additional referral pathway for the Support for Trafficked People Program and restructure the program to better meet the needs of victim-survivors.
- \$18.4 million over four years from 2023-24 to improve the safety of women and children in international child abduction cases.
- \$12.1 million over four years from 2023-24 for primary prevention initiatives including community led sexual violence prevention pilots and Teach Us Consent to develop resources for young people about sexual violence and consent.
- \$10.0 million over four years from 2023-24 to expand the family violence provisions within the Migration Regulations 1994 and support visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence.
- \$8.5 million over four years from 2023-24 for early intervention initiatives, including developing a perpetrator risk assessment framework for frontline service providers, extending the Mensline Changing for Good Service and developing a national perpetrator referral database of services.
- \$6.5 million over four years from 2023-24 (and \$0.9 million per year ongoing) for the Attorney-General's Department to work with states and territories to strengthen and harmonise sexual assault and consent laws and for the Australian Law Reform Commission to review justice responses to sexual violence.
- \$3.3 million over three years from 2023-24 to review emergency accommodation services and their suitability for children and to conduct an independent evaluation of the 1800RESPSECT service.
- The Government is providing \$194.0 million over 5 years from 2022-23 for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, which includes:
 - \$145.3 million over four years from 2023-24 to support activities which address the immediate safety needs of First Nations women and children.

- \$17.6 million over two years from 2023-24 to deliver family safety initiatives under the Action Plan.
- \$23.2 million over four years from 2023-24 to deliver 7 place-based, trauma-aware and culturally responsive healing programs to support First Nations families.
- \$7.8 million over five years from 2022-23 to support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan for Family Safety, including governance, secretariat and data arrangements.
- The Government is also investing \$68.6 million over two years from 2023-24 to National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services to provide legal and non-legal support for First Nations victim-survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence.

Women's Health - Budget highlights

The Budget supported improved health outcomes for women and girls through a range of measures, including:

- \$26.4 million over four years from 2023-24 to extend support for research and data collection activities that support women and girls' health outcomes, including:
 - Funding to continue and strengthen the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSHW) by establishing a First Nations data access strategy and governance mechanism, increasing the diversity of participants, and expanding the collection on comprehensive maternal and perinatal data.
 - Support for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the *Woman-centred care: Strategic directions for Australian maternity services Strategy*, to ensure Australian maternity services are equitable, safe, woman-centred, informed and evidenced-based.
- \$16.8 million to introduce a new Medicare benefit scheme item for a gene expression profiling test (EndoPredict[®]) to determine a patient's risk of recurrent breast cancer.
- Support to subsidise the costs of egg, sperm or embryo storage for Australians with cancer or at risk of passing on genetic diseases or conditions, who have undergone MBS-covered genetic testing.
- \$6.0 million over two years from 2023-24 to support Australian Red Cross Lifeblood's role in maintaining and expanding delivery of donor milk.
- \$5.3 million over two years from 2023-24 to continue support for the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA's) National Breastfeeding Helpline.

- \$6.2 million in 2023-24 to support children to build and maintain positive body image, and reduce body dissatisfaction and appearance pressures.
- \$2.8 million in 2023-24 to extend mental health supports for Australians with eating disorders and their families.
- Extending existing alcohol and drug treatment in communities, including \$3.5 million over two years from 2023-24 to the Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women.
- \$2.1 million over two years from 2023-24 to support women and girls' participation in talent and development programs to increase female representation in coaching, officiating and sports administration.
- Our broader investments in health through this Budget benefit women. This includes
 - \$3.5 billion over five years from 2022-23 to address the decline in GP bulk billing rates for people on low incomes and children.
 - Phasing in measures to maximise dispensing quantities for over 300 PBS-listed medicines from 1 September 2023, reducing the number of visits to pharmacies and general practitioners, saving Australians time and over \$1.6 billion in out of pocket costs over the next four years.
 - \$99.1 million over five years from 2022-23 for the introduction of GP consultations over 60 minutes, providing access to higher rebates for longer consultations for patients with complex conditions and needs. This includes patients with needs related to mental health, family, domestic and sexual violence, chronic conditions as well as reproductive health issues like menopause.
 - \$98.9 million over five years from 2023-24 to implement a new Strengthening Medicare model of care that connects frequent hospital users with general practice to receive comprehensive, multidisciplinary care in the community, reducing the likelihood of hospital readmissions. The Government is also increasing access to multidisciplinary care by \$445.1 million to increase the Workforce Incentive Program-Practice stream to support general practice to engage multidisciplinary teams.

Gender Responsive Budgeting

Subject/Issue

The Government is putting gender equality at the centre of budget decision making with the implementation of gender responsive budgeting.

Key facts and figures

- *Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment* was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website on 11 August 2023.

Key points

- From 2023-24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO), the Government has extended gender responsive budgeting across the budget process, embedding gender analysis in all budget decision making.
 - This delivers on our election commitment and is central to putting gender equality, and the impact on women, at the centre of budget decision making.
- Gender responsive budgeting weaves consideration of gender impact through the budget process and is a key way governments can make informed decisions towards closing gender gaps.
- All agencies will play a greater role in delivering gender equality outcomes by undertaking gender analysis on all new policy proposals, and providing gender impact assessments where new policy proposals meet one or more criteria.
- The criteria for a gender impact assessment are if the proposal:
 - has a significant positive or negative impact on **gender equality**
 - targets **cohorts** of people who can typically be disadvantaged
 - relates to a **gender segregated industry**
 - establishes a **National Partnership Agreement** (or like agreement), or
 - if the total **value** of the proposal is \$250 million or more over the forward estimates.
- With this expansion of gender responsive budgeting, a wider range of proposals across different portfolios, will produce a full gender impact assessment as part of their Budget submissions.

- The quality of gender analysis will continue to improve as agencies learn more about the process and capability is built.

Departments are playing a bigger role in gender analysis

- All departments have a role to play in embedding gender analysis in the design of their proposals.
 - Each department is responsible for self-assessing whether a gender impact assessment is required for proposals they are bringing forward to Cabinet or as part of the budget process.
 - Gender analysis is proportional to the value, scope and impact of the proposal.
- The Office for Women produced a guide, *Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment*, which provides information to assist policy makers to do gender analysis as part of developing a new policy proposal.
 - This guide was published on the PM&C website on 11 August 2023 and has been distributed to APS agencies.

The Office for Women is the centre of expertise for gender equality

- The Office for Women is responsible for implementing the systems and processes that support gender responsive budgeting.
- The Office for Women also provides advice, throughout the Budget process, on items that have a significant impact on gender equality.

Building the capability of the Australian Public Service

- At the 2023-24 Budget, we invested \$1.34 million from the APS Capability Reinvestment Fund in a project to support uplift in gender analysis capability across the APS (BP2, page 189).
 - The Office for Women is leading the co-design project with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Education.
- The Office for Women is also partnering with the Australian Public Service Commission on a gender analysis micro-credential that will be developed and delivered by the tertiary sector.

Improving the data needed to do gender analysis

- The Office for Women established the Gender Data Steering Group (GDSG), co-chaired with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, to maximise the utility of the Government's major data holdings as an evidence-base for gender equality.
 - For more information on the Strategy, refer to SB23-000225.

- The Government launched a Status of Women Report Card to provide a picture of what life looks like for women in Australia.
 - The Government will release a Status of Women Report Card every International Women's Day to highlight contemporary gender equality challenges.

Background

The scale-up of gender responsive budgeting at MYEFO builds on two pilots of gender impact assessment. In partnership with the Office for Women, agencies completed 14 gender impact assessments in the October 2022-23 Budget and 12 gender impact assessments in the 2023-24 Budget.

The Budget Process Operational Rules (effective December 2022 and published on the Department of Finance website) refer to the pilot arrangements for gender impact assessment. That is, 'a select number of policy proposals will be identified by the Government in each Budget round to be accompanied by a Gender Impact Assessment' (page 6).

On 14 August 2023, the Department of Finance issued advice to agencies on the new requirements for gender impact assessment and referred agencies to *Including Gender: An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment*. The Budget Process Operational Rules will be re-issued prior to the 2024-25 Budget and incorporate updated information on gender analysis and gender impact assessment.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates 2023-24 (May 2023)

- SEQoN 0074. Level of analysis - budget versus non-budget policy. Response tabled 14 July 2023.
- SEQoN 0090. Gender impact analysis - pilot guidance material. Response tabled 14 July 2023.
- SEQoN 0091. Gender impact analysis - 24/7 nursing. Response tabled 14 July 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked.

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil.

Relevant Media Reporting

- [Australia's first gender impact assessment guide for federal departments](#), Melissa Coade, The Mandarin, 16 August 2023.

Date:	13 October 2023
Cleared by (SES):	Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch:	Social Policy Division, Office for Women
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:	
Consultation:	Nil
PDR Number:	SB23-000224
Last Printed:	

NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY**Subject/Issue**

The Government is developing a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (the Strategy).

Key points

- Work to develop the Strategy is continuing.
 - We expect to deliver the Strategy in the first half of 2024.
 - We want to ensure that we have the time to develop the Strategy properly rather than quickly. This is a sentiment that has come through strongly from stakeholders through our consultation process.
 - The delivery date has been extended from the second half of 2023 so we can do this, including by properly considering critical inputs, such as the final report of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET), extensive feedback from consultations, and inputs to related processes such as the Employment White Paper.
- The Strategy will be informed by the advice of the WEET, insights from consultations lead by Office for Women as well as other consultative processes across government (such as the Employment White Paper and the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children) and the significant existing evidence.
- The Strategy will support the work of similar state and territory plans and complement other Australian Government efforts to achieve gender equality, including:
 - the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32
 - the Government's response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry
 - the Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Report and related work, including the forthcoming National Framework for Action on First Nations Gender Justice and Equality and;
 - the National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030.

- Australia ranks 26th overall in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2023 (out of 146 countries). Australia ranks 38th for economic participation and opportunity.
 - Australia's 2023 ranking is an increase from 43rd in 2022, but still significantly lower than Australia's rank of 15th in 2006.
 - Australia's increase in ranking was driven by improved results in the 'Political Empowerment' subindex, which rose from 50th to 29th. The movement reflects the increased number of women in parliament and in ministerial positions.

Consultations

- Consultations have captured the views of over 3,000 people and organisations across Australia, across two rounds of consultation.
 - First round consults (November – December 2022) included 14 targeted roundtable discussions with representatives from 124 groups across universities, the community sector, unions, businesses, and with individual experts.
 - Second round consults opened to the public on International Women's Day and ran for six weeks (8 March – 19 April 2023), with the release of a discussion paper and survey.
 - 2735 survey responses and 174 written submissions were received.
- The Minister for Women and Office for Women have also facilitated targeted consultations with key stakeholders, including the National Women's Alliances,
 - the Minister continues to meet with and hear from women on the ground.
- Key priorities raised in consultations include, stereotypes and attitudes towards gender, women's economic equality, health, and safety from all forms of violence. Many stakeholders also noted the importance of the Strategy having an intersectional lens
- The Government is engaging state and territory governments to inform the Strategy and explore alignment with individual state-based approaches.
 - On 28 July 2023, the Minister for Women provided the Women's and Women's Safety Ministerial Council an update on the Strategy.

Resources for strategy development

- In the October 2022-23 Budget, the Government provided \$3.1 million over one year to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to deliver a number of the Government's gender equality commitments, which included funding to develop and deliver the Strategy.
 - The Office for Women is developing the Strategy in-house, and is leading the consultation processes.
 - Office for Women contracted support to co-facilitate phase one roundtables and synthesise the evidence base for the Strategy.

Background

The Strategy is an election commitment, and aims to guide whole-of-community action to make Australia one of the best countries in the world for a gender-equal society.

At the Estimates hearing on 25 May 2023, Senator Waters sought advice on policy reforms underpinning the Strategy and whether this would include procurement reform.

Senator Waters also asked about remaining steps to finalise the Strategy and whether a specific timeframe for release in late 2023 was known.

A Status of Women Report Card was released on International Women's Day 2023 (8 March 2023) to provide a picture of what life looks like for women in Australia and to support ongoing discussions on the Strategy. The Government will release a Status of Women Report Card every International Women's Day.

Meetings and deliverables

Date	Action
November – December 2022	14 targeted stakeholder roundtables, hosted by OFW
February – March 2023	Roundtable consultation summaries published on OFW's website
8 March 2023	Strategy public consultations and survey open (six weeks) Discussion paper and Status of Women Report Card released
17 March 2023	Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council Meeting
19 April 2023	Strategy public consultations closed
April – June 2023	Minister-led engagement – Adelaide (20 April), Melbourne (8 June) and Perth (9 June).
19 June 2023	National Women's Alliances Forum
28 July 2023	Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council Meeting
1 September 2023	Final WEET report provided to Government
1 st half of 2024	Planned release of the Strategy

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- SEQoN 0386 (*Portfolio Question number: 0387*): Strategy resourcing and union consultation. Budget estimates 2023-24 (May 2023). Response tabled 14 July 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked.

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil.

Relevant Media Reporting

- [Positive change as Australia jumps 17 spots in international gender gap rankings – The Mandarin](#) Melissa Coade, The Mandarin, 27 July 2023.
- [Global Gender Gap Report: Australia now ranked 26th on gender equality – The Canberra Times](#) Karen Barlow, The Canberra Times, 25 July 2023.

Date: 29 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division, Office for Women
Contact Officer: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)
Consultation: Nil
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WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EQUALITY TASKFORCE - OPERATIONS**Subject/Issue**

Operations and outputs of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET)
(Refer to SB23-000227 for information on WEET Advice)

Key facts and figures

- Chaired by Sam Mostyn AO, the WEET was an independent advisory group that supported the Government to advance women's economic equality and achieve gender equality.
- Thirteen members, including the Chair, were appointed by the Minister for Women to provide advice early in the Government's term.
- The WEET first met on 21 September 2022 and met a total of ten times during its term.
 - The majority of meetings were hybrid or held virtually.
- Two meetings were attended by the Minister for Women, on 21 September 2022 and 1 March 2023.
 - Meeting outcome documents are published on the PM&C website.
 - The WEET held a number of other engagements outside formal meetings, including receiving briefings on key government policies and reforms, and consulting widely.
- The WEET was time-limited and options for a longer term advisory mechanism will be considered in the context of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.

Key points***Taskforce membership***

- Members were selected based on their wide-ranging, diverse lived experience, background and networks. See **Background** for a list of members.
 - The Office for Women (OFW) provided a list of 52 candidates to the Minister for Women's Office for consideration with a summary assessment of the candidates' skills, qualifications and attributes.
 - Four members of the WEET were recommended by the Minister for Women.

- Taskforce membership included First Nations women, women with disability, young women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, women working in academia, business and civil advocacy.
 - There was also broad geographical representation.

Appointment process

- The Chair was appointed on 30 August 2022 until 30 March 2023, an initial period of six months.
- The other 12 members were appointed on 13 September 2022 for a six-month term until 13 March 2023.
 - Appointments, including the Chair's, were made in accordance with the appointments process outlined in the Cabinet Handbook.
 - The Chair's appointment was agreed by the Prime Minister. The members' appointments were agreed by the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister.
- On 25 February 2023, the Minister invited the Chair to extend her term to 31 May 2023 (ten weeks) and members to extend their terms to 30 April 2023 (six weeks) to allow the WEET sufficient time to finalise its work.
 - All members except Ms Campbell accepted the extension.
 - Ms Picone resigned from the WEET in February 2023 due to pre-arranged personal leave.
- In May 2023, five former members were engaged by PM&C to provide expert advice to support delivery of the WEET's final advice until 30 June 2023.
 - These members were Ms Shelly Cable, Ms Samantha Connor, Professor Rae Cooper AO, Ms Terese Edwards and Ms Danielle Wood.
- On 25 May 2023, the Minister for Women extended the Chair's appointment from 31 May until 31 July 2023 (eight weeks).
- On 12 August 2023, the Chair's term was reappointed until 21 August 2023 (nine days) to support final delivery of the Taskforce's recommendations.
 - The extensions made by the Minister for Women were consistent with Cabinet Handbook processes and were notified to the Prime Minister.
- Eleven WEET members served a seven month term, while the Chair served an eleven month term.

WEET - OPERATIONS

- The WEET's final report was provided by the Chair on 1 September 2023.
 - A preview of the recommendations was provided on 23 August 2023.

Taskforce resourcing

- In 2022-23, \$3.1 million was provided to support the OFW deliver the Government's election commitments, including developing the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*; establish and support the WEET; establishing gender budgeting; and support delivery of a new grant round to encourage more women across the political spectrum to run for public office.

Background

Members were remunerated consistent with the *Remuneration Tribunal Amendment Determination (No. 10) 2022*.

- Members, including the Chair, were paid a daily rate of up to \$1,500 (GST exclusive) and were remunerated for their time, travel and incidental expenses.
- Three former members who assisted with finalising advice beyond their terms were paid an hourly rate of \$200, with a total allowance of eight hours (up to \$1,600).
 - One former member (Ms Cable) provided assistance pro-bono, while another (Dr Cooper) did not request payment.

Taskforce membership

- Sam Mostyn AO (Chair) – Chair of ANROWS; Chair of Australians Investing in Women
- Adrienne Picone – Chief Executive Officer of Tasmania’s Council of Social Service [Ms Picone resigned from the WEET in February 2023 to take long service leave]
- Chiou See Anderson – President at National Council of Women of Australia; board member of the International Council of Women
- Danielle Wood – Chief Executive Officer of Grattan Institute; President of the Economic Society of Australia; co-founder and first Chair of the Women in Economics Network, incoming Productivity Commissioner
- Jennifer Westacott AO – Chief Executive of the Business Council of Australia and Chancellor of Western Sydney University
- Jenny Macklin – Vice-Chancellor’s Fellow at the University of Melbourne, School of Government
- Michele O’Neil – President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Rae Cooper AO – Director of the Gender Equality in Working Life Research Initiative, University of Sydney; President Elect of International Labor and Employment Relations Association (ILERA)
- Samantha Connor – Vice President of People with Disability Australia
- Shelley Cable – Nyoongar, Director and Advocate for Indigenous Economic Empowerment
- Shirleen Campbell – Co-ordinator of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group; NT Local Hero in 2020 [Ms Campbell did not extend her term due to competing priorities. Her term ended on 13 March 2023]
- Sizol Fuyana – Founder of Fuyana Support; 2022 Northern Territory Young Australian of the Year
- Terese Edwards – Executive Director of the National Council of Single Mothers and their Children.

Supporting information

Attachment A – WEET Timeline

Attachment B – WEET Terms of Reference

Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates 2023-24 (May 2023)

- SEQoN 0092. WEET Appointments – letters exchanged. Response tabled 14 July 2023.

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2022-23 (February 2023)

- SEQoN 0092. Women's Economic Equality Taskforce - Meeting arrangements. Response tabled 31 March 2023.
- SEQoN 0093. Women's Economic Equality Taskforce - Short listing of candidates. Response tabled 31 March 2023.
- SEQON 0218. Women's Economic Equality Taskforce - Criteria of appointment. Response tabled 31 March 2023.
- SEQoN 0219. Women's Economic Equality Taskforce - Member selection process. Response tabled 31 March 2023.
- SEQoN 220. Women's Economic Equality Taskforce - Member endorsement. Response tabled 31 March 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked.

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- Sarah Ison, *Superannuation on paid parental leave needed to close gender gap*, The Australian (13 October 2023)

Date: 29 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division, Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil
PDR Number: SB23-000226
Last Printed:

Attachment A: WEET Timeline

30 August 2022	Sam Mostyn AO appointed as Taskforce Chair
1 September 2022	Sam Mostyn AO announced as Taskforce Chair
13 September 2022	Appointment of Taskforce members
21 September 2022	Taskforce members announced with their terms ending 13 March 2023 WEET meeting 1 – Canberra and virtual with Minister for Women
24 October 2022	Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services wrote to Taskforce asking to provide advice on Paid Parental Leave Scheme
2 November 2022	WEET meeting 2 – Virtual
16 November 2022	Stage One PPL advice provided to Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services
5 December 2022	WEET meeting 3 – Sydney and virtual
19 December 2022	WEET meeting 4 – Virtual
23 January 2023	WEET meeting 5 – Virtual
13 Feb 2023	WEET meeting 6 – Canberra and virtual
25 Feb 2023	Taskforce Chair appointment extended until 31 May 2023 Taskforce members term extended until 30 April 2023
1 March 2023	WEET meeting 7 – Virtual - Budget priorities meeting with Minister for Women.
9 March 2023	WEET Chair National Press Club Address
21 March 2023	WEET meeting 8 – Virtual
24 March 2023	Budget key priorities letter received by Minister for Women
17 April 2023	WEET meeting 9 – Virtual
18 April 2023	WEET Budget key priorities letter publicly released
28 April 2023	WEET meeting 10 – Virtual
25 May 2023	WEET Chair appointment extended until 31 July 2023
9 June 2023	Stage Two PPL advice provided to Minister for Women
31 July 2023	WEET Chair appointment ends
12 August 2023	Taskforce Chair reappointed until 21 August 2023
23 August 2023	Preview of final recommendations provided to Minister for Women
1 September 2023	Final WEET report and advice provided to Minister for Women

Women's Economic Equality Taskforce

Terms of Reference

Overview

The Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (the Taskforce) is an independent group of eminent women established to provide advice to the Australian Government to support the advancement of women's economic equality and achieve gender equality, as committed to in the Women's Budget Statement October 2022-23.

The priority contributions of the Taskforce centre on:

- Driving women's economic equality as an economic imperative
- Informing the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality
- Providing strategic advice on key issues arising from the Jobs and Skills Summit, including via the White Paper
- Providing strategic advice on the further implementation of gender responsive policy and budgeting processes.

The Taskforce will report directly to the Minister for Women.

These Terms of Reference may be updated from time to time, in consultation with the Minister for Women.

Membership

The Taskforce membership will comprise:

- Sam Mostyn AO (Chair)
- Chiou See Anderson
- Shelley Cable
- Shirleen Campbell
- Sam Connor
- Rae Cooper AO
- Terese Edwards
- Sizol Fuyana
- Jennifer Macklin
- Michele O'Neil
- Adrienne Picone
- Jennifer Westacott AO
- Danielle Wood

The Chair may invite relevant experts, stakeholders and/or government officials to participate in specific meetings or discussions, as appropriate.

Members will be appointed for an initial period of six months.

Activities and deliverables

In relation to its priority contributions, the focus of the Taskforce should include:

- Advice to Government on priority measures to drive improvements to women's economic equality, especially in relation to issues raised through the Jobs and Skills Summit, and for women currently experiencing disadvantage and women from traditionally marginalised backgrounds
- The gender pay gap and related issues of women's workforce participation, advancement, gender segregation and patterns of paid and unpaid care
- Providing advice on the skills and industries of the future, to create more gender equal economic outcomes
- Safe and respectful workplaces, including for women experiencing violence.

The Taskforce may also:

- undertake targeted consultation or research, especially with women 'on the ground', and seek briefings with key stakeholders and experts as required on the range of issues that impact women's economic equality
- undertake other activities as required, including providing feedback on upcoming legislation.

The Taskforce will give a particular focus to women with intersecting needs, women experiencing disadvantage and women from traditionally marginalised and diverse backgrounds.

The Taskforce will nominate the form of its inputs (written, verbal, etc.), which will be agreed by the Minister for Women.

The Taskforce may develop a work program to guide and prioritise its activities and support engagement with the Minister and key processes. The work program will be adjusted as necessary via agreement of the Taskforce.

Operations

The Taskforce will meet as required, as determined by the Chair, in consultation with Taskforce members. Meetings may be convened face-to-face or virtually.

The Taskforce will report directly to the Minister for Women.

The Taskforce will elect whether and when it meets in private or with observers and technical experts in attendance.

The Taskforce will be supported by a Secretariat within the Office for Women, which will be responsible for:

- coordinating meeting arrangements at the direction of the Chair, including scheduling meetings and invitations, preparing and distributing meeting agendas and minutes
- facilitating Taskforce members to travel to and participate in meetings
- facilitating access to subject-matter expert advice from across the public service, as needed
- supporting the disseminating the Taskforce's advice and findings as directed by the Chair in consultation with the Minister for Women.

Senior officials from the Office for Women, the Treasury and the Department of Finance, and Ministerial advisers will be invited to attend meetings as observers, noting the Taskforce may elect to meet without observers.

Remuneration

Members will be paid a daily rate of \$1,500 (GST exclusive), or an hourly rate using the following formula: under 2 hours, 40 per cent of the daily fee paid, 2-3 hours 60 per cent fee paid, more than 3 hours = 100 per cent daily fee.

Members will be paid for official travel time and any time spent preparing for meetings out-of-session using the formula above. Travel will be arranged and paid for by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Remuneration is based on the *Remuneration Tribunal (Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Office) Determination 2021*.

Duration

The Taskforce has been appointed for an initial period of six months.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EQUALITY TASKFORCE - ADVICE**Subject/Issue**

The Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET) final report and advice on the 2023-24 Budget are their major deliverables to Government.

[Refer to SB23-000226 for information on WEET Operations]

Key points***Final Recommendations and Report***

- The WEET provided its final complete report to the Minister for Women on 1 September 2023.
 - A preview of the recommendations was provided on 23 August 2023.
 - The Chair's term ended on 21 August 2023. All other WEET members' terms ended 30 April 2023.
- The final report was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website on 23 October 2023.
- The final report and recommendations are being considered by Government, including through the development of the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*.
- The recommendations cover themes such as care, work, education and skills, the tax and transfer system, and the role of Government.
 - There is already work under way that will support implementation of many of the recommendations, such as the modernisation of the Commonwealth Paid Parental Leave Scheme, the abolishment and replacement of ParentsNext, continuing workplace relations reforms, the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Early Childhood Education and Care, the National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy and the development of the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*.
 - Improving women's economic equality is a key objective of the recently released Employment White paper, which includes commitment to better measure unpaid work.

Advice on the 2023-24 Budget

- The WEET Chair wrote to the Minister for Women on 24 March 2023 advising on six immediate priorities for the 2023-24 Budget.
 - The advice was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) website on 18 April 2023.
- The WEET's recommendations informed key decisions in the 2023-24 Budget.
- The Government is investing over **\$9.5 billion** over the forward estimates on policy changes that align with WEET recommendations related to payments (see [Background](#) for further information).
- The investments made to drive gender equality in the 2023-24 Budget will be built upon in subsequent Budgets, informed by the advice of the Taskforce and the priorities of the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*.

If asked: why did the public release of the WEET final advice take longer than the release of the Budget advice?

- The final advice is significantly more comprehensive than the Budget advice, and touches on a greater number of portfolios. I needed to take the time to consult with my Cabinet colleagues.

Additional WEET contributions

- The WEET contributed to a range of government priorities to drive women's economic equality, including:
 - Advising the Office for Women on the development of the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*, and being involved throughout consultation processes.
 - Providing advice to Government on the optimal model for the modernised Paid Parental Leave (PPL) model and its expansion to 26 weeks.
 - Engaging with women around Australia to understand their lived experiences with Australia's economic system.
 - Engaging across the Australian Public Service on issues relevant to women's economic equality, including on the Employment White Paper and Care and Support Economy Strategy.

Paid Parental Leave advice

- The Government asked the WEET to advise on the optimal design of the PPL Scheme, including advice on:

- how additional weeks should be accessed to maximise women's economic equality,
- how much leave can be taken concurrently with another parent, and
- the amount of reserved leave available to each parent.
- The WEET engaged Professor Marian Baird and Associate Professor Elizabeth Hill to provide research to inform its advice.
- The WEET provided initial advice in November 2022 that informed the *Paid Parental Leave Amendment (Improvements for Families and Gender Equality) Bill 2022*.
 - The legislated changes commenced 1 July 2023, and sees two weeks of reserved leave and two weeks concurrent leave (parents taking leave at the same time).
 - From 1 July 2024, the PPL scheme will expand by two additional weeks a year until reaches 26 weeks from 1 July 2026.
 - The expansion to 26 weeks delivers six additional weeks to the PPL scheme, giving an increase in the amount of time both parents are able to be financially supported while taking leave to care for their child.
 - The Government considers this provides a starting point and scope to align the expansion of the scheme with the Taskforce's final advice on PPL.
- On 19 October 2023, the *Paid Parental Leave Amendment (More Support for Working Families) Bill 2023* was introduced to Parliament.
- The Bill seeks to increase the reserved period and concurrency limit to four weeks, as recommended by the WEET.
 - On 1 July 2024, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 18 to 20 weeks, maintaining the reserved period and the concurrency limit at two weeks each.
 - On 1 July 2025, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 20 to 21 weeks, the reserved period will increase to three weeks, and the concurrency limit will increase to four weeks.
 - On 1 July 2026, the maximum entitlement for a partnered parent will increase from 21 to 22 weeks, the reserved period will increase to four weeks, and the concurrency limit will be maintained at four weeks.
- The WEET provided advice on the final settings for the 26 weeks entitlement on 9 June 2023.

- The WEET's final PPL advice and the supporting research were published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website on 19 October 2023.
- Australia's Paid Parental Leave Scheme is designed to complement employer-provided schemes by providing a minimum amount of paid parental leave to all eligible working parents.

If asked: is this consistent with the WEET's PPL advice?

- Yes. The WEET (in their final PPL advice) recommended four weeks reserve period and four weeks concurrency in a 26 week scheme.
- The WEET's overarching recommendation for PPL is that the scheme be extended to 52 weeks.

If asked: will the Government implement the WEET recommendations to pay superannuation on PPL?

- The Government reforms to PPL are the largest single enhancements to the scheme since its introduction in 2011.
 - The changes to PPL ensure the Government enhances the scheme in a fiscally responsible way.
 - The Government intends to pay superannuation on PPL, when the Budget allows.

If asked: will the Government implement the WEET recommendation to provide universal, affordable child care?

- Child care is a critical enabler of women's workforce participation.
- The Government has committed \$4.7 billion to increase the Child Care Subsidy rate, making early childhood education and care more affordable for around 1.26 million families – this came into effect in July 2023.
- The Government has asked the Productivity Commission to conduct a comprehensive review into the Early Childhood Education and Care sector. This Review commenced in the first half of 2023, with a final report due on 30 June 2024. It will consider options for universal, affordable child care.
 - The Government will consider the advice of the WEET together with the outcomes of the Productivity Commission Inquiry.

Background

The WEET's 2023-24 Budget letter called for urgent and targeted actions to:

- Reinstatement of Parenting Payment (Single) for women with children over eight years-old.
 - The Government is investing \$1.9 billion over five years from 2023-24 to extend eligibility for Parenting Payment (Single) to support single principal carers with a youngest child under 14 years old. These changes came into effect on 20 September 2023
- Abolish ParentsNext.
 - On 5 May 2023, the Government announced it will abolish ParentsNext and develop a replacement voluntary program commencing 1 July 2024.
 - The Government's decision to abolish ParentsNext and to develop a voluntary replacement program is consistent with the recommendations of the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, the interim report of the House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services and the final report of the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care.
 - Government completed stakeholder engagement on 15 September and is considering design options for the replacement program.
- Abolish the Childcare Subsidy Activity Test.
 - The Government has launched a comprehensive Productivity Commission inquiry into the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, which will consider options for universal, affordable child care.
 - The Productivity Commission will consider activity requirements as part of that inquiry, and will provide a final report on 30 June 2024.
- Payment of superannuation for primary carers while they are on PPL.
 - The changes to the Paid Parental Leave Scheme, which started to come into effect from July 2023, represent the largest single enhancement to strengthen and expand the scheme since its introduction in 2011.
 - These changes saw the 18 weeks of Parental Leave Pay and two weeks of Dad and Partner Pay combined into one payment. Each parent has two weeks of reserved leave and two weeks can be taken concurrently.
 - From July 2024, the PPL scheme will be expanded by two additional weeks a year until it reaches 26 weeks in July 2026.
 - The Government is committed to a fair retirement for women in Australia, including through reducing the superannuation gap.
- Increase the rate of Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA).
 - The Government will provide \$2.7 billion over five years from 2023-24 over the forward estimates to increase the maximum payment rate by 15 per cent. These changes came into effect on 20 September 2023.
- Invest in an interim wage increase for all early childhood educators and aged care workers.

- The Government also committed \$11.3 billion over five years from 2023-24 to fully fund a 15 per cent pay increase to the minimum wage for the aged care workforce.
- The Government invested \$72.4 million over five years from 2023-24 to build and retain the early childhood education and care workforce.
- The WEET also recommended raising the base rate of income support.
 - The Government is investing \$4.9 billion over five years from 2023-24 on increasing working age payments including the JobSeeker Payment. These changes came into effect on 20 September 2023.

Paid Parental Leave

- The October Budget provided \$531.6 million over four years from 2022-23 (and \$619.3 million per year ongoing from 2026-27).

Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

- The Government's Plan for Cheaper Child Care includes:
 - Increasing the maximum Child Care Subsidy (CCS) available for the first child in care to up to 90 per cent;
 - Extending the CCS taper rate to families earning up to \$530,000;
 - Extending the increased subsidy to outside school hours care; and
 - Retaining the higher CCS rates for multiple children in child care.
- The Treasury estimates these reforms could increase women's workforce participation by up to 1.4 million more hours per week in 2023-24, equivalent to 37,000 additional full-time workers.
 - The Government has tasked the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission with investigating the drivers of ECEC prices (final report due in December 2023) and the Productivity Commission (PC) with undertaking a comprehensive review into the ECEC sector (final report due in 2024).
 - The Government is also developing an Early Years Strategy to create an integrated approach to early childhood development, and has consulted with the public on the Strategy.
- The Government passed the Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation last year to introduce a pathway for ECEC workers to obtain higher wages and make it easier for under-valued, female-dominated workforces to seek equal remuneration orders.
 - On 6 June 2023, the Fair Work Commission received an application to commence multi-employer bargaining for a 25 per cent wage increase, covering 66 ECEC employers.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- SEQoN 0385, WEET Report. Budget Estimates 2023-224 (May 2023). Response tabled 14 July 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked.

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- Sarah Ison, [Super on leave needed to close gender gap](#), The Australian (14 September 2023)
- Anna Macdonald, [Equal women's participation in economy required complete transformation](#), The Mandarin (10 September 2023).

Date: 29 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Gender Equality Strategy and Reform
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Department of Social Services
PDR Number: SB23-000227
Last Printed: 18 October 2023

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EQUALITY – INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT WHITE PAPER**Subject/Issue**

The Office for Women (OFW) works to advance women's economic equality through placing women and gender equality at the centre of Government policy and decision making, including in the Employment White Paper.

Key facts and figures

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics gender pay gap for full-time workers average weekly earnings is 13.0 per cent, or \$252.30 per week.¹
- For 2021-22 the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) gender pay gap was 22.8 per cent, equivalent to \$26,600 a year.²

Labour force participation (September 2023)³

- Women's workforce participation rate was 62.7 per cent in September 2023, compared to 71.0 per cent for men.⁴
 - The women's workforce participation rate is equal to the record high of 62.7 per cent, initially reached in May 2023.
 - The Employment White Paper found that Australia has one of the highest rates of women in part-time employment in the OECD, behind only the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan.
 - Australia's employment rate for single mothers is one of the lowest in the OECD. About 52 per cent of single mothers with a child under 5 years participate in the labour market, compared with 70 per cent of partnered mothers and 90 per cent of all fathers.
- Median superannuation balances in 2020-21 were 25.1 per cent less (or \$53,190 less) for women approaching retirement (aged 60-64) than for men of the same age.⁵
 - At 60-64 years-old, the median superannuation balance for men is \$212,000, and \$159,000 for women.⁵

¹ ABS, [Average Weekly Earnings, Seasonally Adjusted](#), May 2023.

² Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Gender Pay Gap data, 2021-22

³ ABS, [ABS, Labour Force, Australia, September 2023](#), released 19 October 2023.

⁴ [ABS, Labour Force, Australia, September 2023](#), released 19 October 2023.

⁵ ATO, [Taxation statistics, 2020-21, Snapshot Table 5, Chart 12, Median super balance by age and sex](#), released 8 June 2023.

Key points

- On 25 September 2023, the Government released *Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities* (EWP).
 - The EWP sets out the Government's ongoing vision for Australia's labour market which is underpinned by five policy objectives, and a roadmap for achieving this vision.
 - These aim to drive a more dynamic economy – boosting women's economic participation and closing gender gaps, creating greater economic resilience, higher productivity and sustained wages growth and improving living standards.
 - The Government is rolling out gender responsive budgeting, which will ensure that every solution arising from the EWP is developed with a focus on gender equality.
 - Details on the policy package are at **Attachment B**.
- The EWP also sets out the challenges for women's economic and workforce participation, including the high level of industry and occupational gender segregation, a persistent gender pay and earnings gap, and gendered patterns of part-time work.
 - The paper found that women's labour force participation has risen from a third in the 60s to two-thirds today.
 - The gender pay gap is persistent, but at its lowest ever level at 13 per cent. This is a 3.1 percentage point decline from 1994.
 - Women's earnings are reduced by an average of 55 per cent in the first five years of parenthood, and this drop remains significant a decade into parenthood.
 - Australian industries remain highly gender segregated—around 65 per cent of occupations in shortage on the Skills Priority List have workforces that are over 80 per cent women or men.
 - Women make up 76.5 per cent of the health care and social assistance sector but only 12.8 per cent of the construction sector.
- The 2023-24 Budget had a strong focus on women's economic equality, including through:
 - Investing \$1.9 billion over five years from 2022-23 (and \$0.5 billion per year ongoing) to expand the eligibility for the Parenting Payment

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(Single) to single principal carers with a youngest dependent child aged 8 to under 14 years of age.

- \$2.7 billion over 5 years from 2022-23 (and \$0.7 billion per year ongoing) to increase the maximum payment rate of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent to all recipients.
- \$4.9 billion over 5 years from 2022-23 (and \$1.3 billion per year ongoing) to increase support for people receiving working age and student payments.
- \$1.5 billion over 2 years from 2023-24 to partner with states and territories to reduce the impact of rising energy prices on households and businesses.
- Abolishing the ParentsNext program from 1 July 2024, and developing a replacement voluntary program. As a first step, on 5 May 2023 compulsory aspects of ParentsNext were paused, while the program is designed in consultation with stakeholders.
- \$8.6 million over four years from 2023-24 (and \$1.5 million per year ongoing) for the Australian Skills Guarantee, which includes national targets for women in apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships on major Australian Government funded construction and information and communications technology (ICT) projects.
- Refer to **Budget 2023-24 Hot Issues Brief** for an exhaustive list of relevant measures.
- These measures build on investments in the October 2022-23 Budget, including:
 - Committing \$4.7 billion to increase the Child Care Subsidy rate, making early childhood education and care more affordable for around 1.26 million families.
 - Investing \$531.6 million over four years from 2022-23 (and ongoing funding of \$619.3 million per year from 2026-27) to extend the Paid Parental Leave (PPL) scheme and increase the flexibility of PPL.
 - On 1 July 2023, the PPL scheme combined into a single 20-week gender neutral entitlement. It retained two weeks 'reserved leave' for each parent, and allows both parents to take two weeks leave at the same time.

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- From 1 July 2024, the scheme will be expanded by two additional weeks a year until it reaches 26 weeks from 1 July 2026.
- On 19 October, legislation to support the final settings of the PPL scheme was introduced. The legislation seeks to increase the reserved period for each parent to four weeks each, with the remaining leave able to be shared however the parents choose. This legislation also extends the concurrency limit to four weeks.
- This is consistent with advice that the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce provided on the final settings for the entitlement on 9 June 2023. This advice was published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website on 19 October 2023.

Superannuation

- In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government introduced the payday super reforms that will require employers to pay superannuation to employees on payday rather than the current quarterly payments.
 - From 1 July 2026, employers will be required to pay their employees' super at the same time as their salary and wages.
 - The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) estimates \$3.4 billion worth of super went unpaid in 2019-20.
 - The change will particularly benefit those in lower paid, casual and insecure work who are more likely to miss out when super is paid less frequently. Women are overrepresented in this group.
- The *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Protecting Worker Entitlements) Act 2023* was passed by Parliament on 22 June 2023.
 - The legislation adds the right to superannuation into the National Employment Standards, commencing from 1 January 2024.

Superannuation on Paid Parental Leave

- The Government does not pay superannuation on PPL.
 - The Retirement Income Review (July 2020) found that if superannuation was paid on Government Parental Leave Pay, the median female earner would receive an additional 0.17 per cent in annual retirement income.

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- The report found that paying superannuation on PPL has a limited impact on closing the retirement income gap.
- The Government's reforms to PPL are the largest single enhancement to PPL since its introduction in 2011. The changes to PPL ensure that the Government enhances the scheme in a fiscally responsible way.
- The Government intends to pay superannuation on Paid Parental Leave, when budget allows.

Background

For 2021-22 the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) gender pay gap was 22.8 per cent, equivalent to \$26,600 a year.⁶

- WGEA calculates the gender pay gap based on average total remuneration full time equivalent earnings for all men and women employed in organisations with 100 or more employees.

A gender pay gap is present across all industries.⁷

- The female-dominated health care and social assistance industry has a full-time gender pay gap of 21.0 per cent.
- In STEM fields, machinery and equipment repair and maintenance had the largest full-time gender pay gap at 24.0 per cent, or a difference of \$34,000 in total remuneration each year.
- Oil and gas extraction had a gender pay gap of 22.0 per cent, which in dollar terms is around \$63,000 a year.

Women's unemployment rate was 3.7 per cent in September 2023, compared to 3.4 per cent for men.

- Women's underemployment rate was 7.2 per cent in September 2023, compared to 5.6 per cent for men.

Industry Super Australia found one in five women were underpaid super in 2019-20, costing each worker an average of \$1,300 in super contributions each year. By the time they retire, these women can miss out on more than \$40,000 in super savings, due to the missing contributions and the lost compounded returns on those contributions.⁸

- The report attributed this shortfall to superannuation laws that allow employers to pay super quarterly rather than with each pay cycle.
- Underpaid super can result in an enrolled nurse having \$44,000 less super at retirement, a personal assistant having \$37,000 less super, and an aged care worker having \$35,000 less super.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

⁶ Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender Pay Gap data](#), 2021-2022.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Industry Super Australia, [Super Solution: How payday super will benefit women in retirement](#), released 29 May 2023.

ECONOMIC EQUALITY

Recent Ministerial Comments

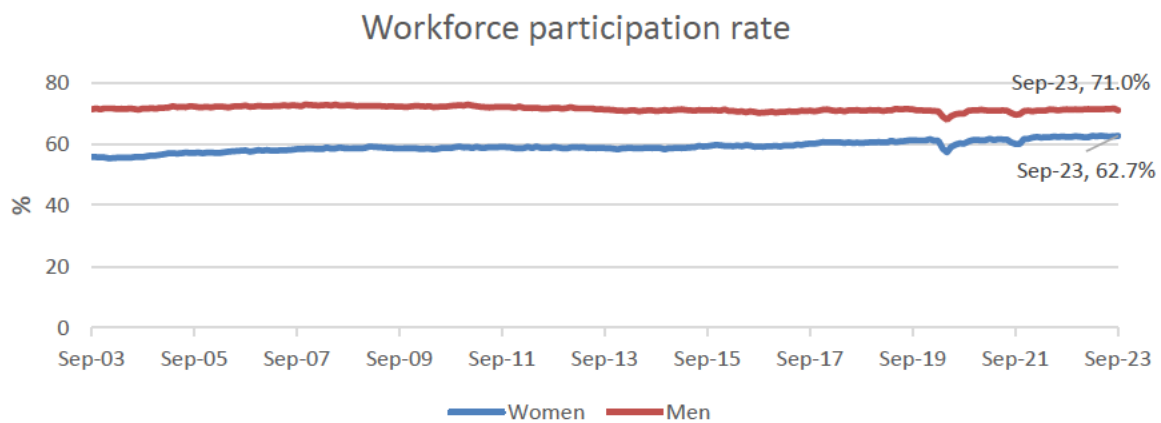
- [The workplace is starting to look better for women, but we're still not there](#) Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher

Relevant Media Reporting

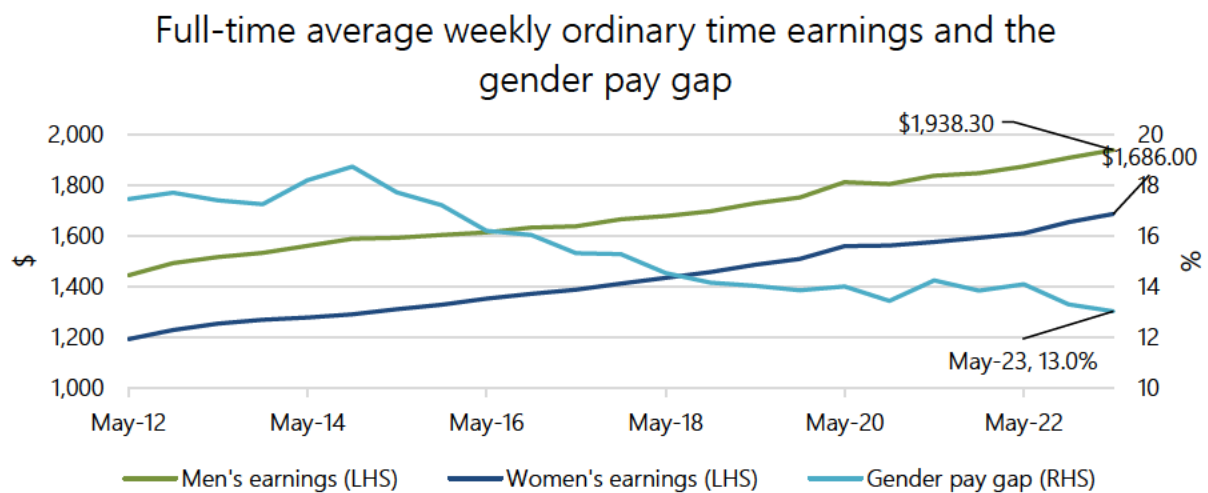
- Nil

Date: 19 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Megan Leahy
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division/Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
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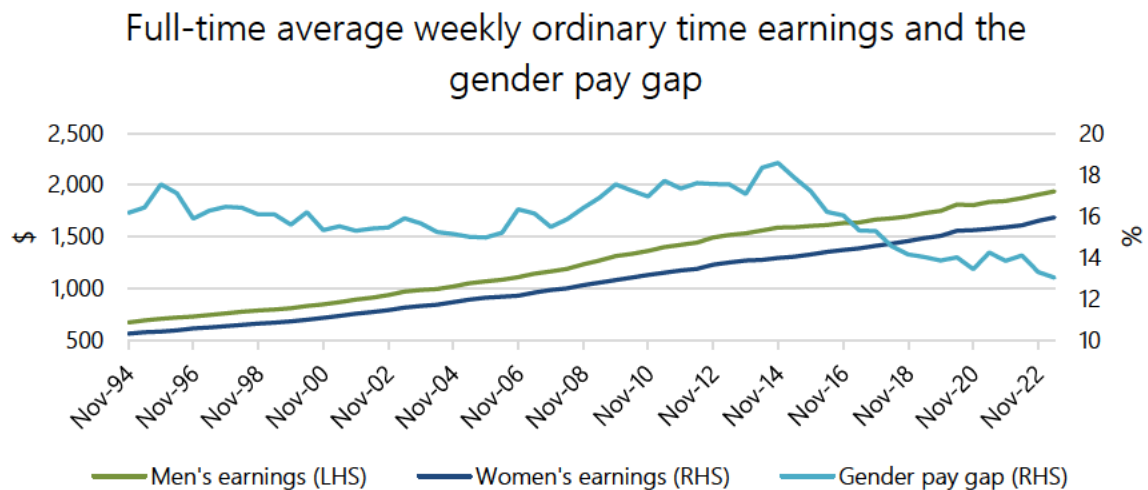
Attachment A



*chart uses seasonally adjusted data, latest month available is September 2023



*seasonally adjusted data is used for the headline gender pay gap.



*for historical context only, all headline figures come from the seasonally adjusted series.

- As part of the EWP, the Government announced a policy package with nine proposals:
 - \$9.1 million to progress scoping work on a National Skills Passport.
 - \$31 million to turbocharge new TAFE Centres of Excellence.
 - \$10 million to develop higher and degree apprenticeships.
 - \$42.4 million to permanently extend the Work Bonus measure for older pensioners and eligible veterans.
 - \$42.8 million to double the employment income nil rate period for many income support recipients.
 - Address labour market data gaps to support policy development and program delivery.
 - Back social enterprises to address persistent labour market disadvantage.
 - Reform the Local Jobs Program.
 - Collaborate with the Coalition of Peaks and First Nations stakeholders to scope an economic partnership.

WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY ACT REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION**Subject/Issue**

The Government is implementing the recommendations of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Act) Review (the Review).

Key facts and figures

- The *Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023* received royal assent on 11 April 2023.
- The Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023 and the Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023 have been in force since 6 February 2023.
- Six of the 10 recommendations of the Review were implemented in part or in full, through the *Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023* and remade Legislative Instruments.
- WGEA will publish private sector employer gender pay gaps (GPGs) for the first time in early 2024.
- WGEA will publish the first Commonwealth public sector GPGs at the end of 2024 or early 2025.

Key points***Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Reforms - Second Tranche of Legislation***

- The Government is progressing the remaining Review recommendations.
 - Recommendation 3.1a: Add a new minimum standard to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to achieve and report to WGEA on measurable, genuine targets against three of the six gender equality indicators.
 - Recommendation 6: Research how to collect more diversity data in addition to gender data to enable voluntary reporting, including on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability.
 - Recommendation 7.2: In line with the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables, enable WGEA to collect data on non-binary people.

- Recommendation 7.3b: The Act may need amending to include partnerships and partners in the WGEA data set more comprehensively.
- These recommendations will further drive employer action, transparency and accountability and will help speed up progress towards closing the gender pay gap.

WGEA Consultations

- WGEA conducted stakeholder consultations from May to July 2023 to inform implementation of the remaining Review recommendations.
 - Stakeholders included academics, private and public sector employers, unions, industry peak bodies, partnerships, organisations representing First Nations, disability, cultural and linguistic diversity and LGBTIQ+ communities, experts in gender, and people with lived experience.
 - The Government has not yet received advice based on these consultations.
- A second tranche of legislation will be introduced as soon as possible in line with the Government's legislation priorities.
 - See **Background and Attachment A** for more information on the first tranche of amendments.

Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles (Recommendation 8)

- OFW is undertaking a review of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles (Principles) associated with the Act.
- Through the review, OFW seeks to improve the effectiveness of the Principles to minimise regulatory burden and maximise progress towards gender equality in procurement.
 - OFW conducted formal public and internal government consultation from August to September 2023 to inform the review. Public consultation included the distribution of a discussion paper and invitation for submissions on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.
 - The outcome of the review of the Principles is anticipated in 2024.

Background

First Tranche of Legislation

- On 4 August 2022, the Prime Minister agreed to implement the 10 recommendations of the Review subject to further consultation.

The first tranche gives effect to the following Review recommendations:

- Recommendation 2: Publishing employer gender pay gaps to accelerate action to close them.
- Recommendation 3.1b: strengthen the existing minimum standards to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to have policies or strategies that cover all six gender equality indicators.
- Recommendation 3.1c: Rename the minimum standards to be ‘gender equality standards’.
- Recommendation 3.2: Strengthen accountability of relevant employers to take action to improve gender equality in workplaces.
- Recommendation 4: reduce the regulatory burden on employers.
- Recommendation 5: Support Respect@Work implementation to prevent and address workplace sex-based harassment and discrimination
- Recommendation 7.1: refine the gender equality indicators.
- Recommendation 9.2: amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act to change the title of the ‘Director of WGEA’ to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

· No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

· No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

· Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

· Nil

Date: 28 September 2023
Cleared by (SES): Shelby Schofield
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Office for Women/Women’s Economic Policy
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: WGEA
PDR Number: SB23-000229
Last Printed:

Status of recommendations of the
Review of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*

Last updated: 20 September 2023

Recommendation 1 – Make it easier for employers to report to WGEA and improve collection and sharing of gender data		
<p>1.1 Improve the quality of data reported to WGEA, and reduce the regulatory burden for employers, by tasking a new Gender Data Steering Group (Recommendation 1.2) to drive and oversee research and stakeholder consultation (including with both human resources and payroll Digital Service Providers) to identify how to:</p> <p>a. enable WGEA to use data employers have already provided to government and</p>	<p>Gender Data Working Group has been established to support the work of the Gender Data Steering Group (GDSG) and fulfil Recommendation 1.1a and b.</p> <p>The Co-Chairs of the GDSG will next provide an update to the Deputy Secretaries Data Group (DSDG) on its work during the 22 November meeting of the DSDG.</p>	In Progress (not legislative)
<p>b. invest in a way to assist employers to extract other data from their own employer systems using a digital solution where possible.</p>		
1.2 Improve the sharing of gender data among WGEA, other departments and agencies by establishing a Gender Data Steering Group under the Deputy Secretary Data Group.	Gender Data Steering Group has been established (co-chaired by OFW and Australian Bureau of Statistics).	Completed
Recommendation 2 – Publish organisation gender pay gaps to accelerate action to close them		
2.1 Amend the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012</i> to allow WGEA to publish gender pay gap information at an employer level as an overall figure and by quartile to encourage change within organisations. Individual employee pay information is not to be published. Conduct further stakeholder consultation to identify the best way to implement this recommendation and conduct a regulatory impact assessment ahead of implementation.	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>WGEA will publish private sector gender pay gaps for the first time in the first quarter of 2024.</p>	Completed

Recommendation 3 – Bridge the ‘action gap’ with new gender equality standards		
<p>3.1 Bridge the ‘action gap’ to strengthen the existing minimum standards by amending the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Minimum Standards) Instrument 2014</i> to:</p> <p>a. add a new minimum standard to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to commit to, achieve and report to WGEA on measurable genuine targets to improve gender equality in their workplace against three of the six gender equality indicators</p>	<p>Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.</p>	In Progress (Tranche 2)
<p>b. strengthen the existing minimum standards to require relevant employers with 500 or more employees to have policies or strategies that cover all six gender equality indicators (not just one policy or strategy for one gender equality indicator in the current minimum standards), and</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023.</p> <p>Employers with 500 or more employees will be required to report the existence of their policies or strategies in their 2023-24 Gender Equality Reporting.</p>	Completed
<p>c. rename the minimum standards to be ‘gender equality standards.’</p>	<p>Partially implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023. Further implementation required through consequential amendments to the Workplace Gender Equality (Gender Equality Standards) Instrument 2023, to flow-through changes from the amended Act.</p>	In Progress (Tranche 2)
<p>3.2 Strengthen accountability of relevant employers to take action to improve gender equality in workplaces by amending the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</i> to:</p> <p>a. require relevant employers to report the date employers share with their employees, shareholders, and/or members the gender equality reports that the employers provided to WGEA, and</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p>	Completed

<p>b. require relevant employers to provide the Executive Summary report and Industry Benchmark report from WGEA to employers to their Board/Governing Body.</p>	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>Employers will be required to provide the Executive Summary and Industry Benchmark report from their 2022-23 Gender Equality Reporting to their Board/Governing Body.</p> <p>Employers will receive these reports in late 2023.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 – Reduce the regulatory burden on employers</p>		
<p>4.1 Amend the <u>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</u> to:</p> <p>a. Remove the ‘reporting levels to the CEO’ question.</p>	<p>Implemented on 31 March 2022 through earlier amendment to 2013 Instrument.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>b. Replace ‘annualised full-time equivalent figures’. Enable employers to report on actual earnings of part-time and casual employees as well as the number of hours employees are engaged.</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>c. Replace the parental leave questions that currently ask employers to report on the ‘proportion’ of their workforce. Instead, enable relevant employers to report by gender, employment status and manager/non-manager category:</p> <p>i. The number of employees with access to employer-funded paid parental leave for primary carers and for secondary carers and the eligibility period for access,</p> <p>ii. The number of employees who took a period of parental leave who ceased employment during, or at the end of that period.</p>	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Recommendation 5 – Support Respect@Work implementation to prevent and address workplace sex-based harassment and discrimination		
5.1 To align the Workplace Gender Equality Act and its associated legislative instrument, include ‘sex-based harassment and discrimination’ as a gender equality indicator in the Workplace Gender Equality Act. It is already Gender Equality Indicator 6 in the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</i> .	<p>Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.</p> <p>New questions were voluntary in 2022-23 Gender Equality Reporting and will be mandatory in 2023-24.</p>	Completed
Recommendation 6 – Research the best way to collect diversity data		
6.1 Undertake qualitative research with relevant stakeholders, led by WGEA, on the best way to collect more diversity data in addition to gender data to enable voluntary reporting, including on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, cultural and linguistic diversity, and disability.	Further development underway (together with 7.2b) to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
Recommendation 7 – refine the gender equality indicators		
7.1 Amend the <i>Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2013 (No. 1)</i> to include mandatory reporting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. employee age (year of birth), noting many employers report voluntarily. 	<p>Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.</p> <p>Employers will be required to report on employee age (year of birth), workplace location, superannuation on parental leave and CEO, head of business and casual manager remuneration in 2023-24 Gender Equality Reporting. These were all voluntary in 2022-23.</p>	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. employee’s primary workplace location, noting many employers report voluntarily 	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed

c. whether superannuation is paid by an employer when an employee is on paid, unpaid employer-funded and/or government-funded parental leave, noting many employers report voluntarily, and	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
d. remuneration data for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) or the equivalent (individual remuneration would not be public but would be aggregated to calculate gender pay gaps and used for other remuneration analysis and insights).	Implemented through the remade Workplace Gender Equality (Matters in relation to Gender Equality Indicators) Instrument 2023.	Completed
7.2 Amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act and associated legislative instruments, in line with the ABS 2020 <i>Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables</i> , to enable WGEA to collect data on non-binary people.	Further development underway (together with 6.1) to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
7.3 To identify the best approach to improve other aspects of gender equality indicator reporting and reduce the regulatory burden on employers, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is to do further work to assess the need for legislative amendments to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. require employers to report to WGEA on occupations and jobs at Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) level 4 for non-managers 	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (not legislative)
b. include partnerships and partners in the WGEA dataset more comprehensively than they are currently (partners in partnership structures are considered owners not employees, this skews the reporting of gender pay gap data to WGEA), and	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms.	In Progress (Tranche 2)
c. make it mandatory for relevant employers to report on data as it relates to individual entities within corporate structures, not as it relates to the group hierarchy.	WGEA is considering administrative options to implement this recommendation.	In Progress (Tranche 2)

Recommendation 8 – strengthen compliance and enforcement		
8.1 Amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act so all relevant employers must comply with WGEA’s reporting obligations for Commonwealth grants eligibility and Commonwealth procurement participation. To support implementation of this recommendation, the Office for Women, with the Department of Finance and other relevant departments, will review the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles.	Further development underway to determine most effective and appropriate implementation options, including as part of any future legislative reforms. A review of the Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles is currently underway.	In Progress (not legislative)
Recommendation 9 – set WGEA up for future success to support employers to drive gender equality in Australian workplaces		
9.1 WGEA is a critical enabler of the WGEA Review recommendations. The recommendations have resourcing implications for WGEA that will require consideration by the Australian Government. To maximise effectiveness, WGEA will need additional investment to implement the WGEA Review recommendations to drive action on gender equality in Australian workplaces.	\$18.5 million was provided through the March 2022-23 Budget to support implementation of the WGEA Review (\$17.5m to WGEA and \$1m to OFW).	Completed
9.2 To avoid confusion with company director roles, amend the Workplace Gender Equality Act to change the title of the ‘Director of WGEA’ to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).	Implemented through the Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Closing the Gender Pay Gap) Act 2023.	Completed
9.3 WGEA to review its Employer of Choice Gender Equality citation to improve its effectiveness as a citation and incentive for more employers to progress gender equality in their workplaces.	WGEA has completed a review of its EOCGE citation, engaging GIWL ANU and Deloitte to assist. Implementation of recommendations will commence in 2023 and continue in 2024.	In Progress (not legislative)

<p>9.4 WGEA to continue to improve the way it supports employers progress gender equality in their workplaces by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. reviewing the reports it provides to employers b. expanding its educational resources c. developing tailored 'off the shelf' policies for small and medium enterprises d. publicising the positive progress of employers e. improving the functionality of WGEA's digital reporting platform f. strengthening its capacity to assist employers to bridge their action gaps, and g. leading employers through the change management required by any reforms flowing from recommendations in this report. 	<p>WGEA has significantly improved the functionality of the reporting platform, established a Capacity Building Team to work directly with employers and is improving reports, resources and tools to accelerate improvement in gender equality.</p>	<p>In Progress (not legislative)</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 – review the Workplace Gender Equality Act in five years from the date any legislative changes commence</p>		
<p>10.1 Formally review the effectiveness of action flowing from this WGEA Review five years from the commencement of any legislative reform.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>In Progress</p>

OVERVIEW – WOMEN'S SAFETY

Subject/Issue

The Government has invested a record \$2.29 billion for women's safety across the two most recent budgets.

Key facts and figures

- On average, one woman was killed by an intimate partner every 14 days in 2020-21.¹
- Since the age of 15:²
 - One in three women has experienced physical violence;
 - One in four women has experienced violence by an intimate partner;
 - One in five women has experienced sexual violence.

Key points

National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032

- In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government provided \$589.3 million to further support the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children (*see [Attachment A](#) for a full list of measures against portfolios*).
- This funding builds on the Government's \$1.7 billion investment in women's safety in the October 2022-23 Budget, bringing total funding to \$2.29 billion across the two most recent budgets to support the National Plan.
- On 16 August 2023, the first two Action Plans to support the National Plan were launched, including:
 - The First Action Plan 2023-2027, which outlines investments and efforts across Commonwealth, state and territory governments over the first five years of the National Plan.
 - The dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025, which outlines actions to address the disproportionate rates of family violence experience by First Nations women.
 - An Outcomes Framework, which outlines outcomes and measurable targets that will enable the Government to monitor progress over the life of the National Plan.

¹ [AIC Homicide in Australia 2020-21](#) - This has been updated from the previous statistic from the 2019-20 - on average, one woman dies every 10 days at the hands of an intimate partner in Australia.

² [ABS, 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey, 15 March 2023 release](#)

Further questions on the National Plan should be directed to the Social Services portfolio.

Sexual violence

- Ensuring the justice system responds to the needs of victim-survivors of sexual violence is a priority of the National Plan.
- The Government is providing national leadership to improve justice system responses to sexual violence by partnering with states and territories to strengthen and harmonise laws relating to sexual assault and consent.

Further questions should be directed to the Attorney-General's/Social Services portfolio.

National Principles to Address Coercive Control

- The Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG) released the National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence (National Principles) on 22 September 2023, which will inform more effective responses to family and domestic violence, and promote more consistent and safer outcomes for victim-survivors.

Further questions should be directed to the Attorney-General's portfolio

Family law reform

- The Government is committed to ensuring the family law system is safer, more accessible and delivers fairness for all Australian families.
- On 29 March 2023, the Government introduced the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023 (the Bill) to ensure that parenting orders are made in the best interests of the child.
 - The Bill was passed by the House of Representatives on 11 May 2023 and passed the Senate on 19 October 2023.
- The exposure draft of the Family Law Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023 opened for public consultation on 18 September 2023 and closes on 10 November 2023, which includes amendments to recognise family violence as part of a property settlement.

Online Safety

- The Government has established the Online Harms Ministers Meeting, chaired by the Communications Ministers, which delivers on the Government's commitment to hold a bi-annual meeting of Commonwealth ministers focused on online harms.

Further questions should be directed to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

Background

Key facts

To date in 2023, community group Destroy the Joint reports that 39 women have reportedly lost their lives due to violence.³

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan.

In 2020-21, First Nations women were over 33 times more likely to be hospitalised from domestic violence than other Australian women.⁴ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan provides targeted action to address the disproportionate rates of violence against First Nations women, and was developed in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence. The Government has committed \$262.6 million to First Nations family safety initiatives, this includes \$194 million to implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, of which \$7.8 million will support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan.

National Plan targets and evaluation

Commonwealth and state and territory governments have agreed to an initial set of six national targets, including:

1. 25 per cent annual reduction in female victims of intimate partner homicide⁵
2. two point increase in the mean Understanding of Violence against Women Scale of the NCAS⁶ every four years, indicating an increase in knowledge of behaviours that constitute family, domestic and sexual violence
3. two point increase in the mean Attitude towards Violence against Women Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that condemn violence against women
4. to point increase in the mean Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that reject gender inequality
5. two point increase in the mean Sexual Violence Scale of the NCAS every four years, indicating an increase in attitudes that reject sexual violence
6. Closing the Gap Target 13: by 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero.⁷

These targets will be measured through a Performance Measurement Plan and Evaluation Strategy that are under development, with additional targets to be identified as more data becomes available. The Performance Measurement Plan will be in place in early 2024, with the overarching Evaluation Strategy being released in mid-2024. The Government will work with states and territories to consider ways to further measure progress over the life of the First Action Plan.

³ [Destroy the Joint, Twitter](#) as at 21 October 2023 – Destroy the Joint is an unofficial community group.

⁴ [AIHW, Family, domestic and sexual violence data in Australia Report, November 2022](#)

⁵ Measured by the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) annual Homicide in Australia report.

⁶ Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety Limited (ANROWS) runs the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) every four years. The most recent NCAS was conducted in 2021. The NCAS collects information on community understanding of violence against women and their attitudes towards violence.

⁷ The Outcomes Framework notes that, at present, there is no appropriate data source available to measure Closing the Gap Target 13. The NCAS and AIC Homicide in Australia report are being investigated as to their appropriateness as a data source.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

On 1 July 2022, the Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission) was established as an Executive Agency. On 1 November 2022, Ms Micaela Cronin was appointed as the inaugural Commissioner, following a transparent, open and competitive recruitment process. The Commission's role is to provide evidence-based policy advice to Government, promote coordination across jurisdictions, track progress of the National Plan and amplify the voices of people with lived experience. The Commission's first annual report to Parliament on progress towards the objectives of the National Plan will be in mid-2024, with plans to release an interim public statement in late 2023. The Commission is establishing a Lived Experience Advisory Council to embed the voice of people with experience of domestic, family and sexual violence in policy at the national level.

Family and domestic violence leave

The Fair Work Amendment (Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave) Bill 2022 was passed by parliament on 27 October 2022. The legislation provides 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards. This reform commenced on 1 February 2023 for employees covered by the Fair Work Act, and 1 August 2023 for employees of small business employers. In the October 2022-23 Budget, \$3.4 million was provided to: educate and support small businesses with implementation, and fund an independent review in February 2024 considering the impact on small business and victims of family and domestic violence.

Sexual violence

The Attorney-General is leading work on justice responses to sexual violence with his state and territory counterparts responsible for laws relating to sexual violence. This included convening a national roundtable on 23 August 2023, which brought together victims and survivors, the service and advocacy sectors, and other experts to inform the terms of reference for an Australian Law Reform Inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence.

On 29 November 2022, the Senate referred an inquiry into current and proposed sexual consent laws in Australia to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee for inquiry. The report was released on 14 September 2023 and included 17 recommendations.

Gender-based violence in higher education

The Australian Universities Accord Interim Report recommended (Priority Action 5) the Government immediately engage with the states and territories to strengthen university governance, with a focus on key issues, including student and staff safety.

The Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, has established a Working Group of state and territory officials with responsibility for higher education to lead the development of an Action Plan, and appointed Ms Patty Kinnersly, Our Watch CEO, as an Expert Adviser to the Working Group. The Working Group is focusing on: student and staff safety; workplace rights; and university governance. The Action Plan is proposed to be endorsed through Education Ministers by the end of 2023.

The National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence

There are 7 National Principles which focus on:

1. A shared understanding of the common features of coercive control
2. Understanding the traumatic and pervasive impacts of coercive control
3. Taking an intersectional approach to understanding features and impacts
4. Improving societal understanding of coercive control
5. Embedding lived experience

6. Coordinating and designing approaches across prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing
7. Embedding the National Principles in legal responses to coercive control.

The National Principles are accompanied by a range of supporting resources, available on the Australian Attorney-General's Department's website. These are designed to be used by government and non-government organisations involved in addressing coercive control.

Family law reform

The Family Law Amendment Bill 2023 proposes to repeal the presumption of 'equal shared parental responsibility', as this often causes prolonged litigation and conflict, impacting cases involving domestic and family violence.

Numerous inquiries have found shared parental responsibility provisions are convoluted and widely misunderstood, leading to parents negotiating outside of the court and entering into arrangements that may not be safe or appropriate for children, under the misunderstanding that equal time with children is an entitlement.

On 24 August 2023, the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee released their report on the Bill, which makes 9 substantive recommendations, including for an education campaign to ensure the reforms are understood by separating families.

The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) led public consultation on the family law reforms closed on 27 February 2023. The Office for Women engaged with AGD on these reforms, including providing recommendations for minor amendments to the early draft of the bill and supporting AGD's gender analysis.

The exposure draft Family Law Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023 contains a second tranche of reforms focussed on improving the law for parties with family law property disputes, and in particular to expressly recognise family violence as part of a property settlement. The exposure draft also proposes a range of amendments to improve and enhance other areas of family law.

Online Harms Ministers Meeting

The Online Harms Ministers Meeting (OHMM) was established in response to the Final Report of the House Select Committee on Social Media and Online Safety (tabled 30 March 2023). The first meeting of the OHMM is likely to be held in mid to late October 2023. Minister Gallagher has been invited as an auxiliary member of the OHMM in her capacity as Minister for Women, chair of the Data and Digital Ministers Meeting and co-chair of the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council. Office for Women participated in the inaugural meeting of the SES Band 2 Working Group on Online Harms, held virtually on 5 September 2023.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- [Government aims to reduce number of women killed by intimate partners by a quarter under new plan](#), Erin Handley, *ABC News*, 16 August 2023.
- [Landmark inquiry recommends immediate creation of taskforce to hold universities to account on sexual violence](#), Claudia Long, *ABC News*, 15 September 2023.
- [Student ombudsman on the tables as governments look to crack down on university sexual assaults](#), Claudia Long, *ABC News*, 6 October 2023.

Date: 16 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Megan Leahy
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division, Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: DSS and DFSV Commission
PDR Number: SB23-000230
Last Printed: 18 October 2023

Attachment A**Women's Safety measures 2023-24 Budget**

Portfolio	Measure	Total \$(m)
Funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's safety		
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan		\$194.0
DSS	\$145.3m over four years, including a provision of \$128.6m in the Contingency Reserve, to support activities which address immediate safety concerns for First Nations women and children	
NIAA	\$17.6m to deliver family safety initiatives under the Action Plan	
NIAA	\$23.2m to deliver 7 place-based, trauma-aware and culturally responsive healing programs to support families	
DSS	\$7.8m to support the development of a standalone First Nations National Plan for Family Safety	
NIAA	Funding over two years to support National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services providers	\$68.6
Funding for the First Action Plan		
DSS and Treasury	\$159.0m over two years to extend the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses	\$326.7
DSS	\$38.2m to extend the Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) and Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot (TVP) to January 2025. Costs to be met from within existing DSS resources	
AGD	\$33.1m Family Law Priority Property Pool program (PPP500)	
DSS	\$24.3m to enhance the Support for Trafficked People Program (STPP)	
AGD	\$18.4m to improve the safety of women and children in child abduction cases	
AGD	\$13.4m to extend the Lawyer-assisted Family Law Property Mediation program	
DSS	\$12.1m for primary prevention initiatives including community led sexual violence prevention pilots and Teach Us Consent	
Home Affairs	\$10m to expand Family Violence Provisions and establish an Enduring Visa Support Capability for Victims of Domestic and Family Violence	
DSS	\$8.5m for early intervention initiatives including developing a perpetrator risk assessment framework, funding the Mensline Changing for Good Service and developing a national perpetrator referral database	
AGD	\$6.5m to strengthen and harmonise Sexual Assault and Consent Laws	
DSS	\$3.3m to develop a National Model of Care for children who present to emergency accommodation as a result of family and domestic violence and to evaluate 1800RESPECT	
Total		\$589.3

Women's Leadership and Development Program

Subject/Issue

The Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) provides funding for a range of activities to improve outcomes for women in Australia.

Key facts and figures

- \$65.703 million total appropriation over 2023-24 to 2026-27.
- More than 76,000 women and girls are estimated to benefit from a range of national and community level projects delivered from 2019-20 to 2026-27.
- These projects contribute to improving the overall economic security, workforce participation, leadership representation and safety outcomes of women in Australia.

Key points

- Delivering on the Government's election commitment to improve gender equality and diversity in politics, \$5 million (2022-23 to 2026-27) will be provided to Women for Election Australia to equip and encourage more women across the political spectrum to run for public office at local, state and federal levels.
 - The project will build and support a pipeline of diverse women to prepare for, and enter, public office via:
 - 1) place-based training events
 - 2) online training forums and mentoring
 - 3) A tech-based training platform, *Campaign in Your Pocket* app, containing candidate resources and support forums.
 - The project commenced in June 2023.
 - They will lead a group of partners to deliver this non-partisan program, including Politics in Colour, Australian Local Government Women's Association, Global Institute of Women's Leadership, Ruth McGowan Pty Ltd, and Quantum Impact Group Pty Ltd.
 - Women for Election Australia were selected through a competitive selection process.

- WLDP projects benefit women from all backgrounds, including women with disability, First Nations women, culturally and linguistically diverse women and women living in rural, regional and remote areas.
- The majority of projects focus on boosting women's employment opportunities, particularly in traditionally male-dominated sectors.
- The WLDP also funds six National Women's Alliances to advocate for women and advise policymakers on Australian Government policies that affect women. (Refer to background for a list of the Alliances).
- Any future funding commitments will be considered in line with government priorities, including those identified in the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.

Background

Reduction in funding over the out years

In the 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 Budgets, WLDP received additional funding through terminating measures. The non-ongoing nature of these measures results in an incremental reduction in funding for WLDP over the out-years. This may be perceived by stakeholders as a cut to funding to the program, or to the Office for Women (OFW), due to how it is reflected in the Department of the Prime Minister's Portfolio Budget Statement (p.29). WLDP base funding is an annual appropriation of approximately \$3.5 million (excl. indexation) and continues over the out years as reflected in the table below.

2023-24 PBS	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
WLDP Appropriation	21.368	21.124	17.965	5.246	65.703

National Women's Alliances

The six National Women's Alliances are:

- Equality Rights Alliance – women's economic security and women's leadership
- National Women's Safety Alliance – women's safety
- Harmony Alliance – migrant, refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse women
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance – First Nations women
- National Rural Women's Coalition – women living in rural, regional and remote areas
- Women With Disabilities Australia – women with disability.

Each of the Alliances will receive \$993,015 over 2021-22 to 2024-25. This includes additional funding of \$127,463 in 2024-25, to be provided for a five month extension to the current agreements from 1 July 2024 to 30 November 2024. Indexation will be applied in 2024-25 once the Wage Cost Index is formalised.

This extension of time will ensure service continuity of women's advocacy during the finalisation and implementation of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality, which is due to be released in early 2024. This also allows for appropriate lead time for advice to be provided about funding arrangements beyond 30 November 2024, to be decided by Government. The findings from the recent evaluation of the Alliances program and the advice from the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce will also inform these decisions.

Sensitivities

- Alliances have long advocated for additional funding, particularly in recent years, noting there are now more calls for their expertise given the expanded gender equality agenda of the Government.
- On 7 October 2022, the Minister received correspondence from the Alliances outlining funding pressures and requesting additional funding ([Attachment A](#) refers).
- This informed the Minister's decision to provide additional funding to Alliances in 2022-23 and 2023-24, in recognition of the contribution Alliances are making to inform the development of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality, and to reflect indexation.

The table below outlines the Alliances funding profile.

Financial Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Base Funding	\$246,899 ¹	\$287,000	\$292,740 ²	\$127,464 ³	\$954,103

s47E(d)

Total	\$246,899	\$312,740	\$305,913	\$131,925	\$997,477
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¹ pro-rata funding from 21 Aug 2021 to 30 June 2022 to commence new agreements following the open competitive round.

² s47E(d)

s47E(d)

⁴ pro-rata funding of 2024-25 indexation is subject to change based on the May 2024-25 Budget.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- Nil

Date: 12 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman, Executive Director, OFW
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Group, Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil
PDR Number: SB23-000231
Last Printed: 18 October 2023



7 October 2022

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher
Minister for Women

By email: senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Dear Minister

National Women's Alliances – Funding

The National Women's Alliances (NWAs) congratulate you on the comprehensive, much needed and ambitious gender equality agenda on which the Australian government has embarked. We very much appreciate this agenda, given the lack of progress we have seen on gender equality for all women over the past nine years.

As you know, the NWA's mandate is to ensure that all women, girls, feminine identifying and non-binary persons are afforded channels and mechanisms to have their voices heard in initiatives to inform Australian Government policies which impact them. We are writing to you collectively to identify what is needed to enable the NWA's to play an effective and meaningful role in supporting the Government's agenda over the coming years.

Since the establishment of the NWAs by Minister Plibersek in 2010, the total funding for the NWA's has significantly declined in real terms, reducing our capacity to support the Government in its commitment to advancing gender equality.

There are a number of factors which have led to this funding decline:

1. The CPI increase to the funding was removed in 2015 and has not been restored, which has significantly reduced the value of the funding in real terms;
2. The NWAs' contracts are currently funded at a level which assumes that the staff and contractors will be paid at community sector wages or lower, rather than being benchmarked against non-female dominated sectors with similar skill profiles (such as the APS). In effect, we are working to achieve gender equality using funding with a built-in gendered wage gap. This is both an ethical issue and a serious barrier in an increasingly tight labour market. We note that the funding offered under the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) grants is significantly higher than the NWA funding, despite the successful projects being more limited in scope than the work required of the NWAs;

3. The funding for the NWAs was never increased in accordance with the equal remuneration order of the Fair Work Ombudsman in 2012, despite many of the staff employed in the Alliances being employed under the SACS / SCHADS award, exacerbating the gendered gap in the funding; and
4. The outcomes expected under the NWA contracts have significantly increased under the present contract, while the funding has remained the same.

The NWAs recognise that the current economic situation is problematic. However, the Alliances are increasingly being called on by multiple Departments and agencies to perform significant work in very short time frames, indicating their importance to the successful implementation of the Government's agenda. At current funding levels, the NWAs core funding is unsustainable.

We propose that:

1. The current funding agreement is varied to increase the funding to at least \$750,000 per annum for each Alliance for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. This would bring the NWAs into line with the funding offered under the WLDP grants, and similar national peak organisations;
2. The next funding round for the NWAs program offers funding starting at \$1M per annum for each Alliance with an annual CPI increase, with expected outcomes to be negotiated with the Office for Women.

The Government's support for civil society participation through the NWAs has been commended internationally and has the potential to significantly improve the participation of women, young women, girls and people of marginalised genders in the development of legislation, policy, programs and services which affect their lives and their human rights.

We request that you increase the Government's investment in the NWAs' capacity to contribute our experience and expertise to effectively support the Government's innovating work on gender equality.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss this request. To arrange this, your office can contact Helen Dalley-Fisher at era@ywca.org.au or on s 47F

Yours sincerely

Helen Dalley-Fisher	Sandra Creamer	Gulnara Abbasova	Keli McDonald	Katherine Berney	Carolyn Frohmader
Convenor	Chief Executive Officer	Executive Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Director	Executive Director
Equality Rights Alliance	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance	Harmony Alliance	National Rural Women's Coalition	National Women's Safety Alliance	Women With Disabilities Australia

WOMEN IN HONOURS AND LEADERSHIP**Subject/Issue**

The Government is committed to driving progress on women's representation in leadership across all sectors and in the Australian honours system.

Key facts and figures

- As at 31 December 2022, women held 51.4 per cent of positions on Australian Government Boards.
- As at 30 June 2022, 41 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions were held by women.
- For Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) companies, the 2023 Chief Executive Women Senior Executive Census highlights that in 2023:
 - 91 per cent of ASX300 Chief Executive Officers (CEO) are men, and 82 per cent of CEO pipeline roles are held by men;
 - At the current rate of change it could take up to 50 years to reach gender parity in CEO roles;
 - Only 1 in 4 new CEO appointments in the ASX300 in 2023 were women. Incremental progress is occurring however, as women's representation in CEO appointments in the ASX300 has increased from 4 of 28 (14.3 per cent) in 2022 to 10 of 42 (23.8 per cent) in 2023¹.

Key points**Australian Government Boards**

- The Government remains committed to current targets for gender balance on Australian Government Boards, originally implemented in 2016. These targets are:
 - Achieving 50 per cent representation of women at a whole-of-government level and at least 40 per cent representation of women and men at the individual board level;
 - For the first time, data at the individual board level was collected during the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

¹ https://cew.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Final-Census_2023.pdf

- As at 31 December 2022, women held 51.4 per cent of positions on Australian Government boards at whole-of-government level. [Publicly reported bi-annually, last reported on 28 June 2023].
 - This is the highest overall result since reporting began in 2008.
- As at 30 June 2022, 41 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions were held by women; 54.4 per cent of new appointments to Australian Government boards were women; and 46.4 per cent of nominations by external organisations were for women. [Publicly reported annually at the end of each calendar year, last reported on 22 November 2022].

If asked: Office For Women (OFW) is finalising analysis of data for the 2022-23 reporting period, and results will be reported by the end of the year. However we can confirm that, as a Government, we continue to maintain overall progress.

- *The Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Annual Report 2022-23 will be published on the OFW website in late 2023.*
- The Minister for Women will provide advice to relevant Ministers on the latest results for their portfolio's reporting period.
- OFW is developing options to continue to improve gender equality on Australian Government Boards, including:
 - Opportunities to strengthen data and reporting on from across Government.
 - Exploring new and refreshed targets at the portfolio and/or individual level, and targets for Chair and Deputy Chair positions.
- These will be aligned with recommendations from Ms Lynelle Briggs' *Review into Public Sector Board Appointments Processes 2023*.

Women's representation on private sector boards and as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)

- At the last Federal election, the Government committed to working with the private sector to boost the representation of women on private sector boards and as CEOs.
- OFW has so far consulted with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), Chief Executive Women (CEW), the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), Women on Boards, and the Chair of the ASX Corporate Governance Council.
 - These consultations identified that the greatest need for improvement in the private sector is in women's representation in companies in the ASX300.

- While ASX appointments are the responsibility of the private sector, there is an opportunity for Government to encourage and influence the private sector, especially through sharing good practice and learning.
 - The Government will convene a roundtable in late 2023 with relevant stakeholders, to explore how to boost the representation of women on private boards and as CEOs.

Women in Honours

- In the 2023 King's Birthday Honours List, 50.5 per cent of Awards in the General Division of the Order of Australia were for women.
 - This is the highest result for women since the awards started in 1975.
 - Women are less represented in higher level honours compared to the lower levels.
- The biggest driver of lower recognition of women through the honours system is a lack of nominations. Men submit more nominations and are statistically more likely to nominate men.
- On 2 August 2023, OFW launched the #NominateAWoman social media campaign to encourage the community to submit more nominations for women for the Order of Australia.
 - The campaign was released via the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (PM&C) website and Facebook, and OFW's LinkedIn and Twitter.
 - The campaign highlights the areas of society with lower nominations to help demonstrate broader gender inequalities in the system.
 - The campaign's key message is that women contribute to our society in extraordinary ways every day, and communities across Australia can recognise this by nominating women and seeing women recognised for their achievements and contributions.
- The campaign is being delivered within OFW's current resourcing.
- OFW will continue to analyse women's representation in Order of Australia results to track improvements.

Background

There were no questions on this topic at the May 2023 Budget Estimates.

Women on Government Boards reporting

OFW collects whole-of-government data on gender balance on government boards at two points each year - as at 30 June and as at 31 December. OFW publishes results annually via a report on the OFW website. Each report covers financial year results and is released in the second half of each year. The headline result of overall percentage of women on boards is updated biannually on the OFW website (the annual report is not updated).

Through the 2022-23 reporting period, OFW collected additional data covering disaggregated Chair and Deputy Chair positions, the representation of women on individual board level, and remuneration data.

This additional data has limitations, including:

- Remuneration is inconsistently reported, and is often amalgamated with salary information. This means a 'gender pay gap' specific to board appointments cannot be calculated.
- The current methodology includes bodies beyond boards, such as advisory committees. Reporting excludes positions on boards and advisory committees that are not appointed by an Australia Government representative (either the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, one or more Commonwealth Ministers or the Governor General in Council).

Women in Honours

OFW has undertaken comprehensive analysis of data to understand the under representation of women in the Order of Australia. This analysis indicates a key contributor to this under representation is the lack of nomination of women.

Data used by OFW was provided by the Office of the Official Secretary of the Governor General (OOSGG) and is not publically available. The OOSGG administers the Order of Australia.

Publicly, the OOSGG does not categorise awards by industry, but their back end data does. OFW use this back end data to analyse what industries or categories of awards are not equally representative of women, and this informs OFW #NominateAWomen Campaign.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- SEQoN 0389, Gender balance in Australian Government board report. Budget Estimates 2023-24. Response tabled 14 July 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- Nil

LEADERSHIP & HONOURS

Date: 16 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Padma Raman
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy & International Engagement
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil
PDR Number: SB23-000232
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HOT ISSUES**Subject/Issue**

This brief covers the following hot issues:

- Plan International Gender Compass Report
- Participation of transgender people in sport
- Access to safe and affordable housing, including for women wanting to leave violence
- Women's health

Key points

Gender Compass report by Plan International Australia (Lead: *Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for Women*)

- Plan International Australia commissioned Heartward Strategic to run a Gender Compass research project, which surveyed Australians aged 16 years and over in mid-2023. 2,522 people completed the survey.
 - The findings show a vast majority (90 per cent) of research participants considered gender equality important.
 - 60 per cent of research participants agreed that gender equality won't be achieved unless all genders take action on this issue.
 - Two thirds (66 per cent) of research participants fall into a segment which is positively aligned with gender equality
- In developing the *National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality*, the Government will consider this report alongside other inputs, including results from the consultation process conducted to inform the Strategy.
- The report reaffirms findings from the Government's consultation processes that people have different views on what they think is most important when it comes to gender equality.

Participation of transgender people in sport (Lead: *Department of Health and Aged Care*)

- Sport is a key aspect of Australian society and it is important that sport is safe, fair and inclusive for all.
- Under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (section 42), it is not unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex, gender identity or intersex status to exclude a person over the age of 12 from participating in competitive

sporting activity in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.

- It is a matter for the governing body for each sport to determine whether it considers it appropriate to exclude or limit participation of people on the grounds of sex, gender identity or intersex status.

Housing (Leads: *Department of Social Services and the Treasury*)

- Women account for 81 per cent of the increase in people experiencing homelessness between 2016 and 2021.
- The Government has introduced a range of measures to support various vulnerable groups within the community, including:
 - 15 per cent increase to the maximum rate of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) to support people with higher costs of living (**DSS**);
 - The Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) which will provide an additional 30,000 social and affordable homes (including 4,000 dwellings for women and children escaping family and domestic violence) over its first five years, and improve the supply of crisis and transitional housing (**Treasury**);
 - \$2 billion to states for social housing, through the Social Housing Accelerator, to create thousands of homes for Australians on social housing waiting lists and increase housing supply sooner (**Treasury**).

Women's health (Lead: *Department of Health and Aged Care*)

- The Government is committed to ensuring all women and girls have access to tailored, high-quality healthcare that responds to their specific needs.
 - This includes protecting and promoting universal access to sexual and reproductive health information, treatment and services, in line with the *National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030* (the Strategy).
- The National Women's Health Advisory Council will guide the Government's delivery of the Strategy and is focused on gender bias in the health system.
 - It conducted a national survey on experiences of gender bias in the health system, which closed on 13 October 2023.
 - Preliminary findings are expected to be made public in early 2024.
- The Government is aware of concerns about the impact menopause may have on women's workforce participation and economic security.
 - We are working towards a fuller understanding of this complex issue and looking at possible responses.

Supporting information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIs asked

Recent Ministerial Comments

- Nil

Relevant Media Reporting

- [High-performance guidelines released for transgender and gender diverse inclusion in Australian sport - ABC News](#) Tracey Holmes, *ABC News*, 16 June 2023.
- [What do the AID guidelines on gender mean for athletes and our elite sports?](#) Aleisha Orr, *SBS News*, 19 June 2023.
- [Gender Compass shows equality still some way away](#) Susanne Legena, *The Canberra Times*, 18 September 2023.

Date: 16 October 2023
Cleared by (SES): Megan Leahy
Telephone No: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Group/Branch: Social Policy Division/Office for Women
Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone No:
Consultation: Nil
PDR Number: SB23-000233
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