



► Gender Balance on Australian  
Government Boards Report 2013-14

A statistical report on the representation of women and men on Australian Government boards, and analysis of progress against the Gender Diversity Target on Australian Government boards.

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## OVERVIEW

On many fronts, 2013-14 has been a year of significant change and transition for the Australian Government and its boards, agencies and committees. The Government has repealed a range of legislation and reporting requirements as part of its deregulation agenda. The Government is also making progress to reduce the size of government and to ensure that government services are as efficient and well-targeted as possible.

The findings of the National Commission of Audit informed the Government's agenda to minimise the size of Government, including the rationalisation of the number of boards. As a result a number of boards were reduced in size, merged with other bodies that performed similar functions, or abolished as part of this reform agenda in 2013-14.

As of 30 June 2014, the number of reportable boards decreased to 387 from 460 at the same time in 2013<sup>1</sup>. The number of board positions also decreased from 4,039 to 3,206. New appointments to Government boards throughout 2013-14 have almost halved in comparison to 2012-13 – from 1,069 to 639.

### Changes to Australian Government Portfolios and Departments

Following the 2013 Federal Election, the Government undertook to streamline the remit of portfolio ministers and their respective agencies. This resulted in significant restructures of portfolios and departments. Some of the portfolio changes included:

- reshaping of the former Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations into two departments – the Department of Employment and the Department of Education;
- the inclusion of multicultural affairs and ageing responsibilities in the Social Services portfolio;
- the relocation of responsibility for small business to the Treasury portfolio; and
- the inclusion of Indigenous Affairs and the Office for Women in the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio.

Portfolio responsibilities for Human Services and Veterans' Affairs are now included within the Social Services and Defence portfolios respectively. However, they are still managed as separate agencies and are reported separately.

As a result of these changes, in particular the significant restructuring of portfolios, it is not possible to directly compare some portfolio-level data in this Report with that of previous years.

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<sup>1</sup> Although not all Australian Government boards are reportable within the *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2013-14* (refer to the [Appendix](#) for reportable board definitions), the reduction can be seen clearly.

## **Sustaining the Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards**

The Australian Government is continuing work towards a gender diversity target where women hold at least 40 per cent of Australian Government board positions. Equally, 40 per cent of these positions are to be held by men, and the remaining 20 per cent can be held by either gender.

Demonstrated suitability and merit remains the driving principle of all appointment processes and diversity policy, as well as ensuring Government board positions are filled by the best candidates Australia has to offer.

The Government has shown its commitment to fuelling the leadership pipeline with strong, confident and capable women, by partnering with a range of world class organisations.

The Government is partnering with the Australian Institute of Company Directors to deliver the Board Diversity Scholarship programme. The programme has been significantly expanded, contributing \$650,000 over two years to deliver 140 scholarships to targeted groups of women.

A partnership between the Government and the Australian Mines and Metals Association has also been established to deliver the Australian Women in Resources Alliances E-mentoring programme. The Government is providing \$440,000 over two years to the programme, which will support talented women in the mining and resources sector to advance their careers through mentoring and technical training.

While Government has a vital role to play in boosting women's representation in leadership and participation in the workforce general, it cannot work alone. Continued action and innovation from business is essential to boosting the presence of women at all levels of an organisation, specifically in leadership and decision making roles.

The Government recognises the many initiatives underway in the business sector to promote women in leadership. For example in 2013, the Business Council of Australia set a target of 50 per cent female representation in all senior management roles in their member organisations within a decade.

The Male Champions of Change initiative – established in 2010 by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Ms Elizabeth Broderick – comprises 21 men in November 2014 in senior leadership positions from business and the public sector, who are dedicated to advocating for the improved representation of women in leadership positions.

The Government is also providing practical assistance to improve women's representation on Australian Government boards, including through the BoardLinks Programme.

## THE 2013-14 REPORT

The *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2013-14* is prepared annually by the Australian Government Office for Women, in collaboration with each government agency. This Report provides a point-in-time snapshot of both whole-of-government and individual portfolio performance against the gender diversity target as at 30 June 2014.

Statistics on new appointments made throughout the 2013-14 financial year are provided to show how individual portfolios are progressing towards meeting the target. In addition, the Report identifies the number of women across portfolios who hold Chair and Deputy Chair positions.

The Report only includes appointments for which the Government has some control or influence in selecting or approving the appointments. Only appointments that are made or approved by the Prime Minister, Cabinet, Governor-General or a minister, regardless of the selection method, are counted for the purposes of the gender diversity target and its related reporting.

## GENDER BALANCE ON AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BOARDS – PORTFOLIO DATA

### Gender Diversity Target Results

The 2013-14 gender diversity target measures the percentages of women and men holding over 3,000 board positions across Government. Table 1 details the number of boards, and the number and percentage of occupied positions, by gender and portfolio, as at 30 June 2014.

As at 30 June 2014, women held 39.7 per cent of the 3,206 board positions on 387 Australian Government boards and bodies.

**Table 1: Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards as at 30 June 2014**

Year	Number of Boards	Number of Positions	Number of Women	Number of Men	% Women	% Men
2014	387	3206	1272	1934	39.7	60.3
2013	460	4039	1685	2354	41.7	58.3
2012	457	4129	1587	2542	38.4	61.6

### Portfolio Performance

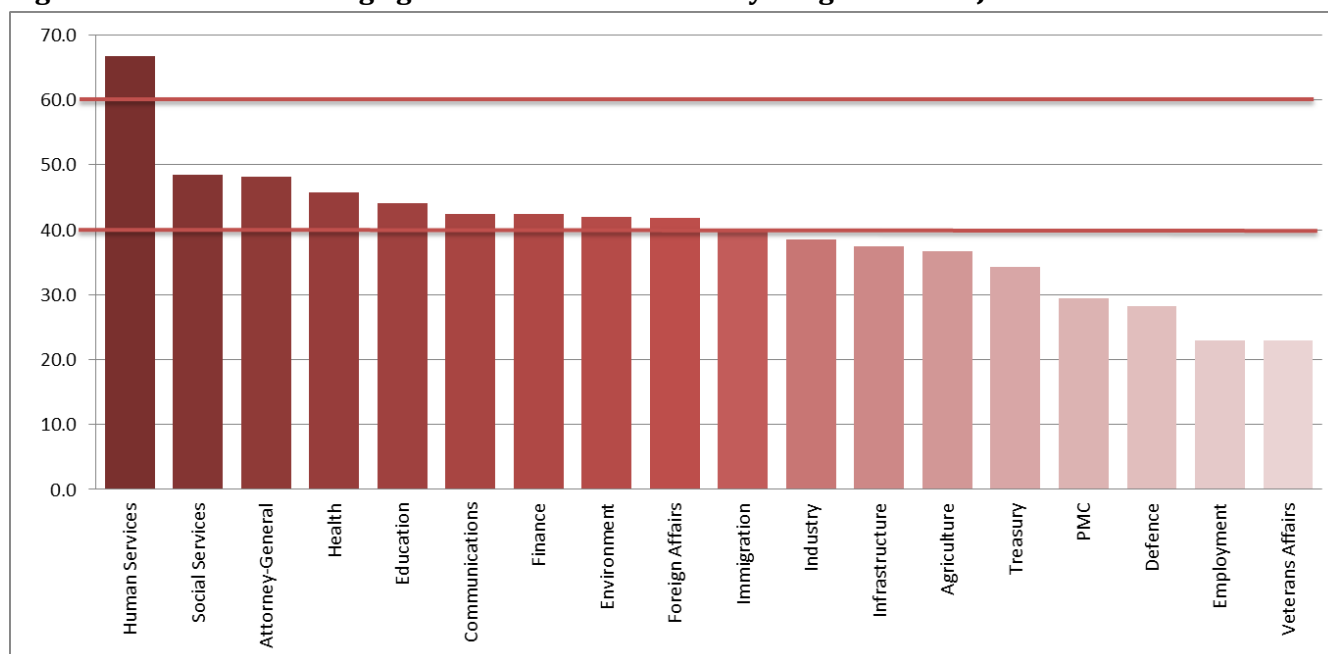
Comparisons across portfolios must be considered within the context of the number of Australian Government boards, and active positions.

As at 30 June 2014, nine portfolios out of 18 have met or exceeded the gender diversity target. Of the nine portfolios that did not reach the target, three are within five percentage points of achieving it. Human Services is the only portfolio to require more men to be appointed in order to achieve the gender diversity target.

**Table 2: Portfolio Results as at 30 June 2014**

Portfolio	Number of Boards	Number of Active Positions	Number of Women	Number of Men	Gender Diversity Target Performance	
					% Women	% Men
Agriculture	21	136	50	86	36.8	63.2
Attorney-General	32	210	101	109	48.1	51.9
Communications	6	40	17	23	42.5	57.5
Defence	14	99	28	71	28.3	71.7
Education	20	143	63	80	44.1	55.9
Employment	7	61	14	47	23.0	77.0
Environment	32	231	97	134	42.0	58.0
Finance	6	40	17	23	42.5	57.5
Foreign Affairs and Trade	20	146	61	85	41.8	58.2
Health	61	696	318	378	45.7	54.3
Human Services	1	6	4	2	66.7	33.3
Immigration and Border Protection	2	20	8	12	40.0	60
Industry	28	166	64	102	38.6	61.4
Infrastructure	69	593	222	371	37.4	62.6
Prime Minister and Cabinet	16	170	50	120	29.4	70.6
Social Services	13	99	48	51	48.5	51.5
Treasury	31	263	90	173	34.2	65.8
Veterans' Affairs	8	87	20	67	23.0	77.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>3206</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>1934</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>60.3</b>

**Figure 1: Portfolio Ranking against the Gender Diversity Target as at 30 June 2014**



## New Board Appointments

Data on new appointments indicates portfolios' efforts to achieve the gender diversity target when provided opportunities in the form of vacancies.

New appointments include all board positions filled between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014 that were not reappointments. New appointments do not need to have been active as at 30 June 2014, but must have been approved within the 12 month time period.

There was a significant decrease in the number of new appointments made in 2013-14: 639 new appointments in 2013-14 compared to 1,069 in 2012-13. Of the 639 new appointments, 36.5 per cent (233 appointments), were awarded to women and 63.5 per cent to men.

**Table 4: Gender Balance of New Appointments made throughout the 2013-14 Financial Year**

Portfolio	Total New Appointments	Number of Women	Number of Men	% Women	% Men
Agriculture	50	15	30	30	70
Attorney-General	43	18	25	41.9	58.1
Communications	8	2	6	25	75
Defence	12	3	9	25	75
Education	30	9	21	30	70
Employment	26	8	18	30.8	69.2
Environment	35	10	25	28.6	71.4
Finance	9	4	5	44.4	55.6
Foreign Affairs and Trade	50	21	29	42	58
Health	99	48	51	48.5	51.5
Human Services	3	2	1	66.7	33.3
Immigration and Border Protection	2	0	2	0	100
Industry	42	15	27	35.7	64.3
Infrastructure and Regional Development	27	9	18	33.3	66.7
Prime Minister and Cabinet	87	21	66	24.1	75.9
Social Services	50	24	26	48	52
Treasury	35	13	22	37.1	62.9
Veterans' Affairs	31	11	20	35.5	64.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>63.5</b>

## Chair and Deputy Chair Roles

Even with the change in the number of Australian Government boards and active positions on these boards, the proportion of women who hold either Chair or Deputy Chair positions on Australian Government boards has remained relatively constant. This data does not include Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director or Managing Director positions.

**Table 3: Gender Balance of Chair and Deputy Chair Roles**

Year (at 30 June)	Total Chair/Deputy Chair Positions	Number of Women	Number of Men	% Women	% Men
2014	455	140	315	30.8	69.2
2013	537	167	370	31.1	68.9
2012	540	147	393	27.2	72.8

2012 and 2013 data supplied by the ABS<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014, 'Gender Indicators August 2014', available at: [www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~August%202014~Main%20Features~Leadership%20roles~610](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~August%202014~Main%20Features~Leadership%20roles~610)



## APPENDIX

### **Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2013-14 – Guidelines**

The Guidelines for the Report establish the parameters for the boards and appointments that are included in the *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2013-2014*.

Not all appointments to all government boards are reportable. Boards that are within the scope of the Report are as follows:

- bodies covered by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). The PGPA Act replaces the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*;
- ministerial advisory committees;
- review committees where the appointments are made by a minister or Cabinet; and
- commonwealth statutory authorities.

A list of the relevant entities that are subject to the PGPA Act can be found at:

[www.finance.gov.au/publications/flipchart/index.html](http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/flipchart/index.html).

Within this subset of boards, only appointments that have some level of input or sign-off from particular representatives of the Government are included, that is:

- the Prime Minister alone;
- one or more Australian Government ministers;
- the Governor-General in Council; and
- Cabinet.

The Report excludes appointments that are:

- to a Commonwealth Court or Tribunal;
- formally elected with no formal Government approval;
- nominated by a third party with no formal Government approval;
- to a particular office holder to a particular board or committee required by legislation;
- appointed by an organisation without Government involvement;
- nominated by a State or Territory Government without Federal Government approval; or
- nominated by a government of another country without Federal Government approval.

Reportable appointments (for the gender diversity target) must have a person filling the position as at 30 June 2014 to be included.

Employees engaged under the *Public Service Act 1999* or other enabling legislation are not included unless the engagement is for the specific purpose of serving on a Commonwealth decision-making or advisory board, committee, council or similar.

Boards that comprise only one person are not included; however, a board that has several members and only one member is reportable is included.

### **New Appointments**

New appointments are appointments which fulfil all of the criteria above but do not require the successful candidate to be formally working in the role at 30 June 2014.