

# INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF TAXATION

## GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2017-2019

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### OPENING STATEMENT

The Inspector-General of Taxation (IGT) Gender Equality Action Plan<sup>1</sup> has been designed in accordance with the document entitled '*Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-19*' (the Strategy), whilst being mindful of a number of considerations, including those set out in the section below. Moving forward, the IGT will work through gender equality initiatives as a business imperative.

Consistent with the Strategy gender ratios require balance. We will continue our efforts to bring forward change on a range of fronts including the application of integrated policies, plans and procedures (PPP) that promote a range of initiatives.

We are committed to gender equality as a business objective, and through our PPPs and related initiatives, change will continue to be promoted and equal opportunity provided to all staff to fully utilise their talents and capabilities.

The IGT's PPPs are contained in IGT specific documents or relevant Department of Treasury<sup>2</sup> PPPs which are adopted pursuant to the IGT *General Policy*. We are committed to specific initiatives that arise from these PPPs, for example the *Progressing Women Initiative: Strategic Direction (2016-2020)* as is appropriate to our Office's specific considerations and circumstances.

In concert with our innovation agenda, a specific committee has been established to support this plan. The committee is gender balanced, chaired by an EL2 director and with senior executive sponsorship provided directly by the Deputy Inspector-General of Taxation. The committee will oversee the progress of actions in this plan, as well provide update reporting to the Inspector-General and our staff.

### CONSIDERATIONS

We are a small specialised agency with national responsibility operating out of a single Sydney-office location. Our small workforce is recruited based on merit and competence. In doing so, we are committed to take account of workplace diversity, recognising gender, age and ethnicity in that process. Our agency's service delivery depends upon staff having specialised taxation law and policy skills and experience. Accordingly, we do face challenges and will seek to meet requirements subject to market availability considerations.

Our public interface through our complaints handling service, may give rise to certain challenges regarding access and well-being in managing the workplace environment.

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1 Including the attached table

2 The Department of Treasury is the portfolio agency and service level agreement provider to the IGT pursuant to a memorandum of understanding.

## INITIATIVES IN PLACE

- Unconscious bias awareness training
- Learning and development opportunities management - equity and access focus
- *Flexible Work Policy*
- *Parenting Leave Policy*
- *Staying In Touch Policy*
- *Domestic Violence Workplace Policy*
- Progressing women platform effected through multiple channels. For example, agency-wide emails, SharePoint page and accompanying resources (contacts, information resources, news and updates)
- *Progressing Women Initiative: Strategic Direction (2016-2020)*

## ATTACHMENT

Strategy focus	Action**	
1. Driving a supportive and enabling culture	In place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality is a business objective and is communicated to stakeholders.</li> <li>• The agency head and senior executives demonstrate commitment to the Strategy by supporting the choices of men and women about their work arrangements.</li> <li>• Leaders with caring responsibilities make these visible to employees.</li> <li>• Recognition that domestic and family violence is a workplace issue, with both victims and perpetrators present in their workforce; that domestic and family violence can take several forms; and that workers can be significantly affected.</li> <li>• A consistent, supportive, and respectful approach to the safety of employees and their workplaces. This includes clear policies relating to domestic and family violence.</li> <li>• Managers are active in promoting access to support and respond with generous and flexible access to existing leave provisions for domestic and family violence victims.</li> </ul>
	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior managers to shape communications to show support for an inclusive workplace.</li> <li>• Managers to be trained to recognise domestic and family violence, and respond appropriately to staff.</li> <li>• Gender equality initiatives to be referenced in the agency's Corporate Plan.</li> </ul>
2. Gender equality in Australian Public Service leadership	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set tailored gender equality stretch targets across all leadership levels and business areas, having regard to the Office's considerations.</li> <li>• Develop and publish action plans to reach gender equality targets.</li> <li>• Senior leaders to commit to the 'Panel Pledge', including by requesting where applicable confirmation on how gender balance will be achieved on a panel and making their participation conditional on meaningful participation by women.</li> <li>• Continue to access programs that support women's progression into senior leadership positions.</li> </ul>
	2017 to 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As needed, update strategies in action plans based on monitoring and evaluation of progress.</li> <li>• Consider the potential for exchange programs for the Senior Executive Service between agencies affected by gender balance.</li> <li>• Consider opportunities to promote the principles and practices of the Strategy across all levels of government.</li> <li>• Work with the Office for Women to develop action plans for achievement of the Government's board representation target and apply the target when appointing to internal boards, committees and panels, where applicable.</li> </ul>

\*\* Timing of all actions are referred to in calendar years.

Strategy focus	Action**	
3. Innovation to embed gender equality in employment practices	In place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality forms part of the agency’s innovation agenda.</li> <li>• Learning and development opportunities are appropriate and equitable.</li> </ul>
	2017 to 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate to the agency’s size and needs, develop a tailored program of personnel practices to promote gender equality and the aims of the Strategy, with the assistance of our service provider.</li> <li>• Work with our service provider in reviewing recruitment, retention and performance management practices to drive gender equality, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– building organisational capability to address unconscious bias; and</li> <li>– committing to appropriate gender balance on selection panels as appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work towards meeting the criteria of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) ‘Employer of Choice for Gender Equality’ citation having regard to the Office’s considerations.</li> </ul>
4. Increased take-up of flexible work arrangements by men and women	2017 to 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current roles and adopt a ‘flexible by default’ approach having regard to the Office’s considerations.</li> <li>• Ensure flexible arrangements are not detrimental to an employee’s career progression and well-being where applicable.</li> <li>• Flexible work arrangements, approaches and policies to be equally available and applicable to men and women.</li> <li>• Develop and implement a return to work framework for working parents that also encourages more men and women to use parental leave provisions.</li> </ul>
5. Measurement and evaluation	2017 to 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate current gender balance across classifications and work areas. This includes appraising organisational culture and reviewing programs, policies, guidance and training to address unconscious bias.</li> <li>• Review performance assessment processes and performance indicators across all levels of management to ensure a range of skills are valued and rewarded.</li> <li>• Leaders, managers and supervisors to engage in honest conversations with their staff about progress towards gender equality and workplace flexibility having regard to the Office’s considerations.</li> <li>• Monitor progress against the Government’s 50 per cent board representation target at both agency level and individual board level where applicable.</li> <li>• Provide data to the Australian Public Service Commission and the Office for Women as requested.</li> <li>• Monitor progress against actions taken under the Strategy and adjust approach as required.</li> </ul>

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