

Aboriginal acknowledgement

South East Water proudly acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and live, and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge their songlines, cultural lore and continuing connection to the land and water. We recognise and value the rich cultural heritage and ongoing contributions of Aboriginal people and communities to our society in Victoria.



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Who we are

Ours is one of the most diverse catchment areas in Australia – from those who are new to our region to the Traditional Owners of the land and water we rely on.





As one of Victoria's three metropolitan water retailers, we support healthy and liveable communities by delivering water, sewerage and recycled water services to

1.91 million people

every day and every night in Melbourne's south east.

Our customers live and work along

270 kilometres

of coastline and across

3,640

square kilometres

of land, from high-rise communities to growth suburbs, and from small agricultural holdings to large industrial areas.

We believe that water is essential for life and that everyone deserves access both now and in the future.



We work for every person and every part of the community –

in homes, factories, offices, shopping centres, sportsgrounds, schools and on farms – so that each and every one of us can enjoy the benefits of a healthy environment inside and out.

At South East Water, we're driven by a purpose to deliver

Healthy water. For life.



A message from South East Water

We're committed to building a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community and our customers. We value the broad range of backgrounds and experiences of our people, equally embracing their unique qualities independent of ethnicity, Indigenous background, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or physical and mental abilities.

Creating an inclusive workplace culture helps us to attract and retain the best people from a broader section of society, and with a wider, more diverse, range of talents, ideas and opinions. Achieving this enhances our collaboration, innovation and supports the delivery of our customer outcomes.

Our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) will help us to plan, implement and measure change in the workplace. We engaged employees to contribute to the development of our GEAP through a workplace gender audit and consultation sessions.

This gave employees a space to share ideas on achieving gender equality in our workplace. We want diversity of thought from a broad representation of employees to help develop initiatives that support a culture of equality no matter anyone's backgrounds.

Employee feedback helped determine five key objectives and a number of actions that will help form our GEAP:

1. Equal workplace composition
2. Learning and development to support careers
3. Understanding flexible ways of working
4. Transparency in recruitment and selection
5. Building confidence to report experiences of sexual harassment

As an organisation we're currently at

46%

gender balance overall (target 50%)

35%

women in leadership (target 42%)

We still have some work to do, with 62% of males and 65% of females feeling they have an equal chance of promotion at South East Water. We'd like to understand why this result isn't closer to 100%.

To achieve workplace gender equality, we must identify where we need to change, and develop strategies and measures to make positive progress. Our GEAP is an important step towards our organisation achieving true gender equality in the workplace.

The case for change

On 31 March 2021, the Victorian Gender Equality Act (the Act) came into effect. The Act requires us to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and promote gender equality in our policies, programs, and services.

The Act seeks to drive change and create gender equality to reach its first principle that

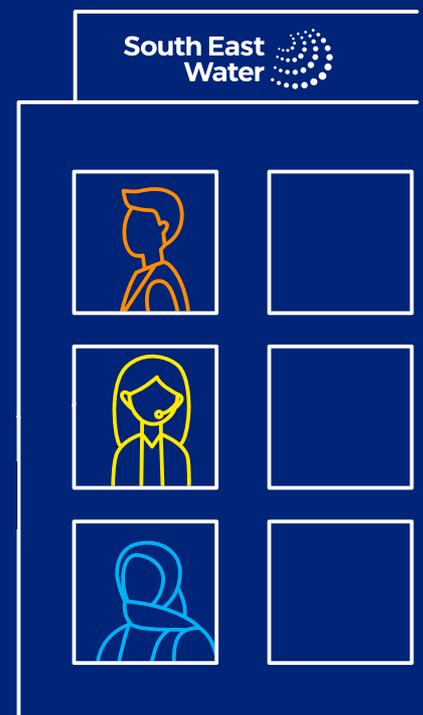
“All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities, and are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.”

Decades of worldwide evidence tells us that gender inequality is a driver of family violence and all forms of discrimination and violence against women. Reducing gender inequality in business and across society improves productivity and the wellbeing of communities. Gender inequality is recognised as a global inhibitor to reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The continued financial deficit of women compared to men across their lifetime limits women’s ability to meaningfully achieve security and participation in society. It leaves them vulnerable to abuse, unable to escape without the assets or income to establish an independent life and provide thriving environments for their children.

While Australia has legislated its responsibilities under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1984, we continue to fall on the World Economic Forum’s global gender gap report, sliding from number 12 to number 70 in women’s economic participation in 2021.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has revealed significant structural inequalities in gender segregation regarding job security. Research has found there was and continues to be an unequal impact on women’s workforce participation, potentially undoing decade’s worth of improvements. Female representation in leadership has been a stubborn cause for concern across Australian public and private sectors. Women are underrepresented at leadership and management levels.



Progress towards gender equality has been too slow even though there are strong economic arguments underpinning the case for equality. By collecting and reporting data on gender composition at all levels, we can see where we could benefit from greater gender diversity and take action to support women into secure work and senior roles. Appointing more women into key decision-making positions has been proven to deliver better company performance, greater productivity, and greater profitability.

Case study

Parental leave

Committed to making South East Water an inclusive workplace where all parents can enjoy the same opportunities with the birth or adoption of a child, we made significant enhancements to our parental leave policy in 2020. These enhancements included removing 'primary' and 'secondary' carer labels, and instead offering 14 weeks paid parental leave to all parents and carers.

We introduced a Keeping in Touch program designed to support our people throughout their parental transition with coaching, keeping in touch days and flexible options for returning to work. We also chose to pay superannuation on unpaid periods of parental leave for up to 52 weeks.

By empowering our employees to play an active role in the first year of their child's life and ensuring our people have ongoing financial support, we're keeping them invested in their careers during their time away from the workforce while helping close the wage gap between men and women.

When our people feel engaged and connected to our organisation and can make their own choices about how they care for their family, based on what works for them, they benefit, their family benefits – and our customers benefit too.



The Gender Equality Act's purpose and objectives

The Act's goals and objectives are to:

- Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women
- Support the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policies, programs and delivery of services in workplaces and communities
- Recognise that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes
- Redress disadvantage, address stigma, stereotyping, prejudice and violence, and accommodate persons of different genders by way of structural change
- Enhance economic and social participation by persons of different genders
- Further promote the right to equality as set out in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The Act achieves these objectives by:

- The Victorian public sector taking positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality
- Considering and promoting gender equality in policies, programs and services
- Establishing the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (CGEPS) to provide education, support implementation and enforce compliance.

A key part of the Act is incorporating intersectionality into our objectives, purpose and obligations by addressing how gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience. This includes characteristics such as Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion and sexual orientation.

Case study

Women in leadership at South East Water

Priscilla Chung is part of our senior leadership team, managing the planning and delivery of critical infrastructure projects. She plays an important role mentoring others and advocating for change for women in STEM.

Priscilla reflected on her experiences early on in her career, "While my ideas and work have always been highly valued by my employers, I was often put into a supporting role. Meanwhile peers who looked and thought like the existing managers were hand-picked for promotion."

Taking matters into her own hands, Priscilla actively looked for workplaces with an inclusive culture aligning with her sense of purpose.

"At South East Water, we have open and honest conversations about diversity and inclusion. We pride ourselves in this space and have a work culture that enables us to be ourselves at work." said Priscilla.

"I returned from parental leave to my previous workplace, and realised I needed a change, I need a workplace I could progress my career in full gear, while caring for a baby. I am very glad for the very supportive culture at South East Water. I wasn't judged when I wanted to work full time, I was given flexibility to be fully effective at work as well as looking after my family."



Our inclusion and diversity strategy progress

Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds achieves better outcomes for all. It means our services are enriched by having access to a diverse set of skills, experiences and perspectives.

This means sustainable value will be delivered to our organisation, workforce, stakeholders and communities.

Our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Strategy was updated in 2020 and an updated action plan is undertaken annually focussing on four key objectives:

- **Advocacy and leadership** – *leading and promoting inclusion and diversity benefits at every opportunity*
- **Sense of belonging** – *a workplace culture that fosters respect, connection and fairness for all*
- **Seeing inclusion** – *a workplace culture that celebrates differences and engages everyone*
- **Reflecting our customers** – *we report on and continuously improve our employee demographics to closely reflect our customers.*

Our commitment to gender equality is supported by our Board and Executive management team. They will ensure we:

- Continue to educate and communicate with our employees, customers and communities by promoting the benefits that inclusion and diversity brings to our organisation
- Promote gender equality in policies, programs and services that impact our staff or community
- Comply with legislation.

With support from our internal EMBRACE working group, we've delivered many actions in our I&D strategy. The EMBRACE working group includes employees who have volunteered from across the organisation to help influence positive change for inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

Key I&D strategy deliverable highlights

- Implemented a new dashboard to help measure how we're tracking against our targets

- Increased gender equity for women in levels 6+ positions

- Achieved gender equity in our leadership programs and recruitment panels

- Improved the language for advertising vacant roles

- Refreshed our Flexibility toolkit

- Launched a mentorship program

- Offered transition coaching for employees utilising parental leave

- Provided support for our Parents group event by engaging an external guest speaker

- Promoted dates of significance including International Women's and Men's days, Cultural Diversity week, IDAHOBIT and Wear It Purple days, National Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks, and International day of People with Disability

- Implemented our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

- Launched our First Nations Cultural Awareness online training

- Hosted Aboriginal university students as part of the Victorian Public Sector Commission's Barring Djinang summer internship program

- Included new questions in our *Have Your Say* engagement survey to understand employee's sense of belonging and help build an inclusive and psychologically safe workplace culture to measure both progress year on year and benchmarking with top quartile employers

- Launched Empower, an employee resource group focusing on advancing gender equality in the workplace.



We achieved FlexReady certification, with FlexCareers recognising South East Water as an employer who demonstrates a genuine commitment to workplace flexibility.

We also partner with Work180 as an endorsed employer who is genuinely committed to driving equality.

As a member of Diversity Council Australia, we committed to the **#IStandForRespect** pledge to make our workplace respectful and safe for all, by standing against gendered harassment and violence in all its forms.

Our vision

Our vision for gender equality is to be a safe, progressive equal opportunity employer where you're valued and respected for who you are and where your rights, talents and expertise are embraced, celebrated and rewarded without discrimination, prejudice or unconscious bias.

Our vision statement was developed in consultation with our employees, following a number of workshops asking them to contribute their ideas on what they wanted gender equality to look like in four years' time.

40 ideas were received and then shared with the Empower group to help develop some key words for inclusion in a vision statement.

Following this activity and in collaboration with a communications team representative, the vision statement was developed.

Our values

We put safety first

The wellbeing of all our people, customers and community comes first.

We're bold

We strive to excel.
We have the courage to challenge ourselves.
We're future-focused and accept change is constant.

We care

We listen to understand.
We do all we can to meet the needs of our people, customers and community.

We discover

We search for new ways to deliver value. We're curious and creative, learn from mistakes, and celebrate success.

We're real

We embrace diversity.
We take responsibility.
We do what we say and get things done.

We deliver sustainably

Our decisions are made with the understanding every drop and action counts.

Workplace Gender Audit

This was the first major gender audit that we've undertaken, with no comparable data available. It provides significant information about our organisation. The reporting period of the workplace gender audit was from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

To support the analysis of our audit, we engaged Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), the peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women. GEN VIC are also a panel provider for CGEPS, helping defined entities meet their obligations under the Act. Women's Health in South East (WHISE) are part of the Action for Gender Equality Partnership and they were the delivery partner that completed the work.

When reading the data, this information should be considered as the baseline, which will be benchmarked against in the coming years. In addition, when reviewing the data, readers should note that the information reflects employees as at 30 June 2021.

The seven workplace gender equality indicators, as defined in the Act, represent the key areas where workplace gender inequality persists and where progress towards gender equality must be demonstrated.

The workplace gender audit was based on two sources of data:

- Data from our payroll systems aligned and reported against the seven indicators; and
- Data from questions aligned to the People Matter Survey which is also reported against the seven indicators and based upon a consistent set of employee experience questions, set by the CGEPS.

The results of the audit were compiled in the required reporting templates and submitted to CGEPS on 1 December 2021. A summary of the results will be included in our GEAP which must be submitted by 31 March 2022 and will be published on our website.

Consultation

CGEPS guidance asks for at least two rounds of consultation to share the results of the workplace gender audit. This consultation was carried out across the organisation, including with our Safety, Wellbeing, People and Remuneration (SWPR) Committee comprising our Board Chair, four Board Directors and Managing Director, the Executive team and Australian Services Union (ASU) delegates. This allowed feedback on the proposed strategies and measures that should be included in the GEAP. All employees were invited to voluntarily join one of six consultation workshops to contribute to the development of strategies and measures in the GEAP.

We've had a continued focus on women in leadership positions, measuring progress on gender equity in levels 6+ positions for the past few years. All women in these levels were directly invited to provide insights more specifically on continually making progress on our leadership gender equity targets.

70+ employees participated directly in the first round of consultation workshops. The results of the WGA

were presented and we workshoped some of these results to get employee input on the strategies they wanted to see in the GEAP. We also held a specific workshop with the ASU delegates to allow for honest conversations where they could share their thoughts, ideas and insights.

From all of the ideas shared, draft actions were collated and presented back through a survey where all employees were again invited (including 160 employees directly invited) as part of the second round of consultation to prioritise the actions for our GEAP. We had 58 responses to the survey from employees.

Engagement with the Executive team is also a requirement of our GEAP development. The WGA results and draft actions from employee workshops were shared with our Executives to gain insights into these and any other suggested actions to achieve gender equality. The Executive team were asked to prioritise, by voting, on which actions they believe would have the most impact for our GEAP.

The final actions were then determined by combining the two sources of data for the second round of consultation.

Consultation with our SWPR Committee included a discussion on the WGA and draft GEAP actions. They were also asked to provide feedback on any other significant actions they've seen in other organisations that have been impactful in achieving gender equality in the workplace.

2021 – 2025 Action plan

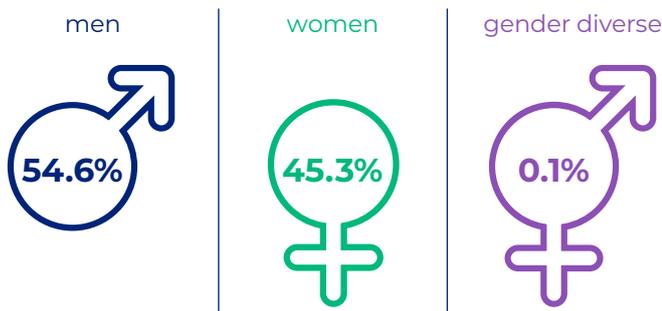
Gender Equality Indicator 1: Gender composition at all levels of the workforce

This indicator helps show where we can benefit from greater diversity. It highlights whether there is equality of representation across all levels of the workforce. In a gender equitable workplace, all employees should have equal access to opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes. This includes equitable access to different modes of employment and career progression through various levels of leadership.

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Workforce gender data

Employees in our workforce



All age groups are male dominated except 35-44 years which has 51.2% women.

The Executive team as defined by CGEPS reporting, comprises of

54% men

46% women

This includes Managing Director and level -1 direct reports, and two female senior officers.

The Senior Leadership team as defined by CGEPS reporting comprises of

55% men

45% women

This includes Managing Director and level -1 direct reports, and level -2 direct reports to General Managers.

The Senior Leadership team as defined by South East Water reporting comprises of

62% men

38% women

This includes Managing Director, General Managers and their direct reports.

Gender equality employee experience survey

More men than women agreed there is a positive culture within South East Water in relation to:

	Men	Women	Non-binary
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	81%	75%	100%
Disability	81%	70%	50%
LGBTIQ+	77%	75%	50%
Different sexes/genders	84%	76%	50%
Varied cultural backgrounds	89%	86%	50%
Different age groups	84%	76%	100%
Use of inclusive and respectful images and language	91%	90%	50%
Feeling culturally safe at work	86%	85%	0%
People in their teams do not reject others for being different	86%	82%	100%



48%

(366) of employees responded to the survey

- ♀ 45% women
- ♂ 44% men
- ♀♂ 0.5% non-binary
- ⊙ 8% preferred not to say

8% identify as having a disability

7% identify as LGBTIQ+

10% preferred not to say

62% Australian

28% culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)

2% New Zealand

8% preferred not to say.

Gender Equality Indicator 1: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Equal workplace composition	Continue with existing actions and review learnings annually to increase opportunities for women in senior leadership positions (L6+)	42% representation	2022	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Talent
		45% representation	2023	
		50%+ representation	2024 – 2025	
	Continue with existing actions and review learnings annually to increase the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our workforce aligned with our Talent strategy	1% representation	2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Talent
		2% representation	2025	
	Continue with gender balanced shortlists and interview panels unless an exemption is granted	Ongoing	2021 – 2025	Hiring People Leaders and Talent
	Continue to measure and report on gender diversity in identified top talent	Talent dashboard	2021 – 2025	People & Safety – Talent
	Use data to understand where diversity is under represented and work towards all teams having a 40/40/20 split (minimum 40% females or males)	Quarterly	2023	Executive, Branch/ Group Leaders and People & Safety – Governance & Insights
	Launch an inclusive language guide, promoting respectful behaviours and embed into our everyday language	Once-off	2022	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity
Continue to promote the benefits of inclusion and diversity by celebrating up to three gender related events each year with guest speakers	Continue annually	2021 - 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity	
Continue to recognise 30 dates of significance to increase awareness for the inclusion of gender identity, cultural backgrounds, ethnicity, religion, and disability, and collaborate across the organisation to develop and deliver an annual event plan	Continue annually	2021 - 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Communications	

Gender Equality Indicator 1: Actions continued

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Improve reporting for transparency	Improve the Inclusion and Diversity dashboard recruitment data and include additional data for all levels of the workforce for gender pay gap, turnover and gender representation in branches, and diversity demographics such as cultural identity, country of birth, languages, and religion and provide access to all employees	Quarterly	2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Governance & Insights
	Develop a plan for collecting more intersectional data 1) in our People Central HRIS system and 2) increase transparency on the way data will be used and the benefits of disclosing so employees feel safe to share. Overall reducing the number of 'prefer not to say' demographic responses in engagement surveys from 10% down to 7%	Annually 1) People Central 2) <i>Have Your Say</i> engagement survey	2021 – 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity
Apply a gender equality lens into our practices and processes	Continue to ensure a gender impact assessment is implemented into relevant policy creation and review processes as per CGEPS requirements	Ongoing	2021 – 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity
	Establish a gender impact assessment register for reporting	Each year in the Annual Report GEAP progress report	Completed by end of June every year Completed by October 2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity

Gender Equality Indicator 2: Gender composition of the board

This indicator reports on female representation in our board. Key benefits of gender diversity and inclusion in governing bodies include improved business performance, greater productivity where gender diversity is present, reductions in pay gaps for leaders, with evidence showing gender equitable representation on boards leading to a 6.3% reduction in pay gaps and greater likelihood of identifying and meeting community needs.

The Victorian Government owns all water corporations and appoints non-executive directors to the water corporation boards. Board directors come from all walks of life, bringing a range of different experiences and skills.

The gender composition of South East Water's Board at 30 June 2021:

- We have eight non-executive directors including the Chair, and a Managing Director on our board
 - the Chair is a woman
 - the Deputy Chair is a woman
 - the Managing Director is a woman
- There is 50% women and 50% men which does not include the Managing Director as defined by CGEPS reporting.

Beginning 1 October 2021, we welcomed two new board directors, one woman and one man and we farewelled one director who was a man. This means the composition of the board is now 67% women and 44% men including our Managing Director.

Gender Equality Indicator 2: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Demonstrating leadership in the inclusion of diversity	Internal feature articles on the diversity of our board members	Annually	2023 – 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Communications
Demonstrating leadership in LGBTIQ+ inclusion	Continued participation in the WSAA Pride in Water network as board ambassador	Once-off	2022 – 2023	Managing Director
Improve reporting for transparency	Map out reporting on the diversity of our Board against the requirements of the CGEPS	Once-off GEAP progress report	2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Governance & Insights

Gender Equality Indicator 3: Gender pay equity

This indicator is about equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender.

Recent national analyses have identified a persistent gender pay gap, favouring men, for full-time workers in all industries and occupational categories.¹ Across the Victorian public sector, there is currently a 10.7% gender pay gap. While women make up 68% of the public sector workforce, they are significantly over-represented in lower paid roles. In public sector leadership positions, a gender pay gap favouring men also persists.²

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Workforce payroll data

A gender pay gap that is positive means the average annualised full-time salaries of men are greater than women, while a gender pay gap that is negative means the average annualised full-time salaries of women are greater than men.

11.4%

Overall, an 11.4% gender pay gap in favour of men, which is using the same calculation method comparable to the gender pay gap in Victoria of 12.2%

-0.1%

Gender pay gap for levels 6 to Executive in favour of women and remains within our target range of less than 1%

7.7%

Levels 1-5 pay is determined by our Enterprise Agreement, the gender pay gap is 7.7% in favour of men

27.7%

The largest pay gap in each age group was 27.7% for 55-64 years in favour of men

-2.2%

The gender pay gap for 15-24 years was -2.2% being the most favourable category for women overall



1. Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2021, Gender Pay Gap Fact Sheet
2. Victorian Public Sector Commission, 2020, Employee and Gender Pay Gap

	CGEPS reporting 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 Median base salary gap	SEW internal business performance reporting 30 June 2021
Overall Level 1 to Executive	11.4%	not currently reported
Level 6 to Executive	-0.1%	*-1.0%
Level 1-5	7.7%	**0.0%

CGEPS median base salary gap dataset includes employee exits. It does not include Managing Director, overtime, penalty rates or other allowances.

*We currently measure the gender pay gap for levels 6 to Executive as part of the monthly executive business performance reporting and I&D dashboard. Levels 6 to Executive is based on a salary range remuneration where possible disparity of pay could occur.

Our Managing Director has been excluded from this dataset as per CGEPS reporting requirement. If included this would demonstrate a further negative pay gap (favourable to females) for levels 6 to Executive employees.

Our gender pay gap comes from digging deeper into levels 1-5 where over 70% of our employees are represented.

** As level 1-5 employees have a fixed pay scale as per our Enterprise Agreement (e.g. no salary ranges) we have not been including the gender pay gap in our business performance reporting. However, when looking more deeply at overall levels 1-5 based on the CGEPS calculation method, this highlights a pay gap. The main drivers for this are:

- There are more women than men at levels 1 and 2
- There are 42% more men than women at level 5
- There are more men in higher sub levels in levels 3 and 5 (reflecting tenure at that level)
- Employees who work 40 hours per week were not standardised back to a 38 hour week, hence with 20% more men working 40 hours across levels 1-5, particularly at levels 3-5, it translates to a pay gap in favour of men

Disparity in each of the sub levels (e.g. 5.1 vs 5.3) reflects an employee's tenure within the level as employees move up sub levels each year of service e.g. promotion to level 5.1 you move up to 5.3 over the following 3 years assuming performance targets achieved.

Gender Equality Indicator 3: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Improve reporting for transparency	Improve the collection of quarterly data by reporting the gender pay gap for all levels of the workforce (currently just focused on senior leadership roles at level 6+)	I&D dashboard	2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity and Governance & Insights
	Undertake a deep dive into roles where there is a gender pay gap present in levels 1-5 including allowances, overtime and shift work to understand if there is a gender bias. Develop a plan to improve gender pay equity at these levels	Once-off	2023	People & Safety Inclusion & Diversity and Governance & Insights and People Leaders

Gender Equality Indicator 4: Workplace sexual harassment

This indicator tracks the workplace environment and enables equality more broadly. Consistent collection and reporting on data leads to transparency and accountability.

How we respond to incidents and reports of sex-based discrimination and harassment has a significant impact on employee physical and psychological safety and perceptions of workplace support for women. This includes the integrity of our reporting and complaints policy and system. The culture of our workplace to call out poor behaviours is equally important, along with the accountability that leadership has of themselves and others to lead a zero-tolerance policy to sexual harassment.

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Gender equality employee experience survey

4%

(7) women experienced sexual harassment in the form of:

- Sexually suggestive comments/jokes that made them feel offended
- Repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms by a colleague
- Intrusive questions about their private life or comments about their physical appearance
- Inappropriate staring or leering that made them feel intimidated.

27.3%

 of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, avoided the person by staying away from them

- 13.6% tried to laugh it off or forget about it

1

 0.6% (1) man experienced sexual harassment in the form of inappropriate physical contact

1

 Only one person submitted a formal complaint, two told a leader, and two told the person their behaviour was not okay.

Gender Equality Indicator 4: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Building confidence to report experiences	Launch an awareness campaign on our anti-discrimination, harassment and bullying policy and grievance procedure: 1) to encourage reporting sexual harassment 2) support employees to feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviours 3) reinforce the importance this can have on impacted employees and inform all the different pathways and support for reporting	Number of employee sessions delivered All complaints are comprehensively investigated in a timely manner	2022 2024	People & Safety – People Partnerships and Inclusion & Diversity
	Create a 'BOLD' campaign on behaviour that is not acceptable by relaunching our Code of conduct policy and values	Once-off	2023	People & Safety – People Partnerships and Inclusion & Diversity
Improve reporting for transparency	Improve reporting categories so they're more specific for capturing accurate sexual harassment incident reporting	Once-off	2022	People & Safety – People Partnerships and Inclusion & Diversity
Take an industry approach to the prevention of sexual harassment	Continue to collaborate with VicWater and the wider Victorian water sector to share information and resources and identify further opportunities to partner on projects responding to sexual harassment and addressing gender inequality	Ongoing	2022 – 2025	People & Safety – People Partnerships, Leadership & Culture and Inclusion & Diversity
	Participate in the Victorian water industry Respect@Work discussion forum to share experiences, challenges and successes in addressing sexual harassment	Ongoing	2022 – 2023	People & Safety – People Partnerships and Leadership & Culture

Gender Equality Indicator 5: Recruitment, promotion, learning and development

The objective of this indicator is to uncover possible biases in recruitment, promotion and professional development processes. Gender bias and stereotypes can influence recruitment, promotion and career progression practices.

Other forms of disadvantage and discrimination can also have an impact, limiting career opportunities for women from different backgrounds, such as women with disability or older women.

Data on recruitment and promotion outcomes can show where women's careers are stalling and help identify strategies to create more equal opportunities.

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Workforce employment data

238

appointments during the reporting period

53% women

47% men

- Appointments by level as per CGEPS reporting includes:
 - 86% men, 14% women in level MD -1
 - 54% men, 46% women in level MD -2
 - 58% women, 42% men in level MD -3
 - 59% women, 41% men in level MD -4
 - 52% men, 48% women in level MD -5
 - 75% women, 25% men in level MD -6
- Appointments by employment basis included:
 - 50% men, 49% women in full-time permanent/ongoing positions
 - 50% women, 50% men in full-time contract/fixed term positions
 - 95% women, 5% men in part-time permanent/ongoing positions
 - 67% women, 33% men in part-time contract/fixed term positions
 - 71% men, 29% women in casual positions

60

permanent internal promotions were made during the reporting period

57% women

43% men

74% women

26% men

received higher duties which refers to a temporary internal arrangement where an employee moved into a higher classification period of more than two weeks

Gender equality employee experience survey

- Employees agreed the following factors were not a barrier to success within South East Water
 - Gender – 76% men, 76% women, 100% non-binary
 - Age – 73% men, 70% women, 100% non-binary
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander – 74% men, 65% women, 100% non-binary
 - Cultural background – 85% men, 77% women, 100% non-binary
 - Disability – 79% men, 65% women, 100% non-binary
 - Sexual orientation – 80% men, 75% women, 100% non-binary.
- Organisational climate, employee perceptions of fairness and integrity
 - 87% men, 84% women, 50% non-binary agree people in their group actively support inclusion and diversity in the workplace
 - 84% men, 72% women, 100% non-binary agree senior leaders actively support inclusion and diversity in the workplace
 - 88% men, 87% women, 100% non-binary agree their people leader works effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Employees agreed with the following about learning and development opportunities relating to recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace:
 - 70% men, 62% women, 50% non-binary were satisfied with the way their learning and development needs were addressed in the last 12 months
 - 65% women, 62% men, 50% non-binary felt they had an equal chance at promotion
 - 77% men, 68% women, 50% non-binary felt there were adequate opportunities to develop their skills and experience.

Gender Equality Indicator 5: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Learning and development to support careers	Increase the coaching skills of people leaders so they have regular performance planning and development discussions with team members	Number of employees with performance goals in People Central Annual performance reviews Have Your Say engagement survey question “do you have regular one on ones with your People Leader”	2023	People & Safety – Leadership & Culture and People Leaders
	Leadership support the mentorship program as mentors by making time for having at least one mentee	Mentorship program	2023	Senior Leadership and People & Safety – Talent
	Develop a reverse mentoring program	Mentorship program	2024	People & Safety – Talent

Gender Equality Indicator 5: Actions continued

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Learning and development to support careers	Next up People Leaders to conduct six monthly skip meetings focused on listening, development and career progression	Annual performance planning and reviews	2023	Senior Leadership and People & Safety – People Partnerships
	Launch an e-learning module for all hiring people leaders to complete on unconscious bias, its effect on recruitment and working relationships	Leadership essentials program New People Leaders learning pathways	2023	People & Safety – Leadership & Culture
Transparency in recruitment and selection	Create and formalise our Technical Pathways program	Number of employees accessing the program	2022	People & Safety – Talent
	Increase transparency of career paths particularly for technical roles	Have Your Say engagement survey	2022 – 2025	People & Safety – Talent
	Continue to ensure feedback for unsuccessful internal candidates is more specific with actions to support their personal development	Continuous listening survey	2021 – 2025	Hiring People Leaders, supported by Talent
Improve reporting for transparency	Align methods of tracking data with the way the CGEPS requires data to be reported for:	GEAP progress report	2023	People & Safety – Leadership & Culture
	1) career development training	People Central	2021 – 2025	
	2) separate higher duties and internal secondments	Once-off	2023	Governance & Insights

Gender Equality Indicator 6: Leave and flexibility

Structural and cultural factors mean women are far more likely than men to work flexibly. Leave and flexible work arrangements help employees of all genders balance paid work with family or caring responsibilities. Encouraging more men to take leave to care for children or others is key to supporting more equitable sharing of responsibilities, normalising career breaks and increasing women's representation in leadership roles.

Important to note is that in 2019, we enhanced our Parental Leave policy by removing labels for primary and secondary carers and increased their offering of 14 weeks paid parental leave to partners. This was an increase from two weeks and can be used at any stage within the first 12 months of their child's life. We also pay superannuation on unpaid periods of parental leave up to 52 weeks. The aim is to help families share caring and home tasks equally and empower both parents to take an active role in the first year of their child's life. This is particularly important for women who typically return to work on a part-time basis and therefore receive reduced superannuation payments as they earn less.

It also highlights a critical impact on women's career progression. We offer transition coaching to parents as part of the broader Keeping in Touch program to minimise the impact on their career.

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Workforce flexibility data

63

employees that took parental leave
(paid or unpaid) during the reporting period

52%

 (33) women

48%

 (30) men

- 71% women, 29% men took paid parental leave
- 94% women, 0.6% men took unpaid parental leave
- 62% men, 38% women were in full-time permanent/ongoing positions
- Two men were in full-time contract/ fixed term positions
- 86% women, 14% men were in part-time permanent/ongoing positions.

Gender equality employee experience survey

- Out of 366 employee responses, 75% of women, 72% of men and 50% non-binary accessed flexible work arrangements
 - 51% men, 43% women, 50% non-binary worked from an alternative location
 - 28% men, 19% women use flexible start and finish times
 - 15% women, 12% men work more hours over fewer days
 - 1% women job share
 - 19% women, 3% men work part-time
 - 3% men, 2% women purchase leave
 - 1% men shift swap
 - 1% men took study leave
 - 2% women, 1% men used leave to work flexible hours.
- Employees agreed that the following factors are not a barrier to success at South East Water:
 - Caring responsibilities – 79% men, 67% women, 100% non-binary
 - Family responsibilities – 85% men, 66% women, 100% non-binary
 - Requesting a flexible work arrangement – 92% men, 87% women, 100% non-binary.
- 91% men, 88% women, 100% non-binary employees felt they have the flexibility to manage work and non-work activities and responsibilities
- 86% men, 84% women, 100% non-binary employees agreed South East Water is supportive with family or other caring responsibilities, regardless of gender
- 81% men, 73% women, 100% non-binary employees agree there is a positive culture within South East Water in relation to employees who have caring responsibilities.

Gender Equality Indicator 6: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Understanding flexible ways of working	Continue promotion of the flexible working options available to employees through regular communications	Have Your Say engagement survey	2022 – 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity
	Provide more training for leaders on managing flexible teams and ensure its easily accessible	Leadership essentials program via face to face and online training, and access to a resource library	2023	People & Safety – Leadership & Culture
	Normalise flexibility through a campaign to promote the benefits and flexible working options for men and field-based employees to work flexibly	People Central	2023	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity

Gender Equality Indicator 7: Gendered work segregation

Gendered work segregation is driven by gendered norms and stereotypes about what work is appropriate for men and women, as well as structural factors including access to flexible working arrangements. It reinforces gender inequality and widens the pay gap, as the average pay is lower in industries and occupations dominated by women.

By looking at the data, we can see which roles and areas have more women or men and consider how to achieve better gender diversity.

Key audit results from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Workforce gender composition by occupation group

- Administration – 80% women, 20% men
- Customer service – 70% women, 30% men
- Engineering, Science and Technology – 76% men, 24% women
- Executive – 56% men, 44% women
- Finance – 57% women, 43% men
- IT – 62% men, 38% women
- HR – 71% women, 29% men
- Other – 58% women, 42% men.



Gender equality employee experience survey

Employees agreed that work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender in their group.

87% men

85% women

100% non-binary

Gender Equality Indicator 7: Actions

Strategy	Actions	Measure	Timeframe by Financial Year	Responsibility
Valuing diverse teams	Develop gender targets across all functional areas of the organisation ideally reflecting 40/40/20 split	I&D dashboard	2023 – 2025	People & Safety – Inclusion & Diversity
	Identify employees approaching retirement, develop transition plans that include six months plus overlap with transitioning new people into roles with support from retiring mentors with a focus on supporting females into male dominated teams	Mentorship program	2023	People & Safety – People Partnerships, Talent and People Leaders
	Continue to explore opportunities to partner with universities for roles/teams that are traditionally dominated by males	Graduate program	2021 – 2025	People & Safety – Talent
	Explore new Australian migrant work sponsorship opportunities for roles/teams that are traditionally dominated by males	I&D dashboard	2023	People & Safety – Talent



2021 – 2025 Resource plan

Our strategic resource plan outlines how the GEAP will be implemented with key accountabilities for each of the stakeholder roles and we will leverage our internal teams for support as required.

Delivery of actions will be covered within existing budgets for financial years 2021 and 2022 and will be part of the annual budget cyclical review for financial years 2023 - 2025.

As key influencers across the organisation, our EMBRACE (all diversity pillars) and Empower (gender focused) employee groups will help support the implementation of key actions in the GEAP.

Stakeholder	Role	Key Accountabilities
Executive	<p>Champion gender equality at every opportunity across South East Water</p> <p>Lead an engaged and diverse workforce to deliver great customer outcomes</p>	<p>Work towards all teams including projects and working groups have a 40/40/20 split (minimum of 40% females or males)</p> <p>Female representation in senior leadership positions (L6+) 42% in FY22, 45% in FY23 and 50%+ from FY24 to FY25</p> <p>Indigenous Australians represent 1% of the workforce in FY23 and 2% by FY25</p>
Branch/Group Leaders	<p>Champion gender equality at every opportunity across South East Water</p> <p>Work towards all teams including projects and working groups having a 40/40/20 split (minimum of 40% females or males)</p> <p>Lead an engaged and diverse branch that delivers great customer outcomes</p>	<p>Female representation in senior leadership positions (L6+) 42% in FY22, 45% in FY23 and 50%+ from FY24 to FY25</p> <p>Indigenous Australians represent 1% of the workforce in FY23 and 2% by FY25</p> <p>Have Your Say engagement survey results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at South East Water 80%+ • We are encouraged to be innovative even though some of our initiatives may not succeed 80%+ • Other teams at SEW collaborate with us to get the job done 60%+ • I can be my authentic self at work 80%+

Stakeholder	Role	Key Accountabilities
People Leaders	<p>Lead inclusive teams that are diverse and empowered to be their best</p> <p>Support development, engagement, safety and wellbeing by undertaking coaching focused 1-on-1's, undertaken fortnightly with each team member</p>	<p>Have Your Say engagement survey results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at South East Water 80%+ • We are encouraged to be innovative even though some of our initiatives may not succeed 80%+ • Other teams at SEW collaborate with us to get the job done 60%+ • I can be my authentic self at work 80%+
Employee Experience and Talent Manager	<p>Champion gender equality at every opportunity across South East Water</p>	<p>Delivery of I&D strategy and metrics and GEAP outcomes</p>
Inclusion & Diversity Coach	<p>Support all stakeholders to deliver on their accountabilities in the GEAP</p>	<p>Facilitate the delivery of all actions in the GEAP</p> <p>Report gender equality progress in the I&D dashboard each quarter and share with senior leadership, and annually with the organisation</p> <p>Continue to facilitate quarterly I&D meetings which include the Executive members: Managing Director, Executive sponsor and General Manager People & Safety</p>
Talent Team	<p>Influence recruitment and talent practices to achieve diverse outcomes</p> <p>Influence succession planning to ensure the talent pipeline achieves gender equality goals</p>	<p>Support hiring leaders to achieve female representation in senior leadership positions (L6+) 42% in FY22, 45% in FY23 and 50% from FY24 to FY25</p> <p>Achieve 1% inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the workforce in FY23 and 2% in FY25</p>
Leadership & Culture Team	<p>Provide a suite of flexible learning and development options giving all employees equal opportunities to develop their skills and grow their careers with SEW</p>	<p>Equal gender participation in leadership development programs</p> <p>People leader training and assessments to incorporate inclusive leadership</p>
People Partnerships Team	<p>Provide advice, coaching and education to the business on practices and approaches across the employee life cycle enabling the delivery of strategic outcomes.</p>	<p>Annual performance planning and review program</p> <p>Sexual harassment complaints are comprehensively investigated in a timely manner including the tracking of underlying cultural risks within the team</p>
Communications Team	<p>Provide advice and support with internal communications activities to promote and share relevant information and activities relating to the GEAP</p>	<p>Support the implementation of the GEAP and development of a communication plan</p>

How to get in touch

Email support@southeastwater.com.au

General account enquiries 13 18 51

South East Water Assist 9552 3540

Hearing and speech impaired services

TTY 133 677 (ask for 13 18 51)

Interpreter service 9209 0130 (all languages)

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