



*We're working for
Western Australia.*

Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment

Annual report | 2018/19

**A new paradigm for
workforce diversification**

Letter of transmittal

Hon Mark McGowan MLA
PREMIER

In accordance with Section 144 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, I hereby submit my annual report for the year ending 30 June 2019, for your information and presentation to the Parliament of Western Australia.



SONJA COX
DIRECTOR OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

13 September 2019

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From the Director



I am pleased to present the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Annual Report 2018/19.

There is a significant body of research showing that diverse workplaces are more innovative, productive and responsive than those that are not diverse.

Despite this, the data in this annual report shows representation of diverse groups in Western Australia's public sector is low compared to the wider community; particularly in senior levels.

Diversity in the public sector is too often treated as a 'bolt on' to workforce strategy and development. Compliance targets are set to achieve greater representation of diverse groups while real opportunity for greater inclusion is missed.

Many public organisations are missing the true value of diversity – diversity of thought, where perspectives and capabilities are the point of difference, not simply visible differences between people such as gender and ethnicity.

Diversity of thought is even more critical when we consider that public organisations are operating in an environment of tremendous change. The complex, multifaceted challenges we face require innovative solutions and must reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

This annual report sets out these challenges and a direction for the coming year. It gives examples of positive outcomes being achieved in public organisations as well as ideas for diversity and inclusion which can be adopted by others.

In the coming year, the Public Sector Commission will develop a whole-of-sector workforce diversification strategy to bridge the gap between compliance and meaningful outcomes. The Commission will lead a collaborative approach to enable an understanding of the issues. This will lead to identifying the actions needed to create a public sector that values workforce diversification and places inclusion at the centre of service design and delivery.

A diverse public sector workforce is more than a 'nice to have' – it is more innovative, productive and responsive, and better placed to service our community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sonja Cox'.

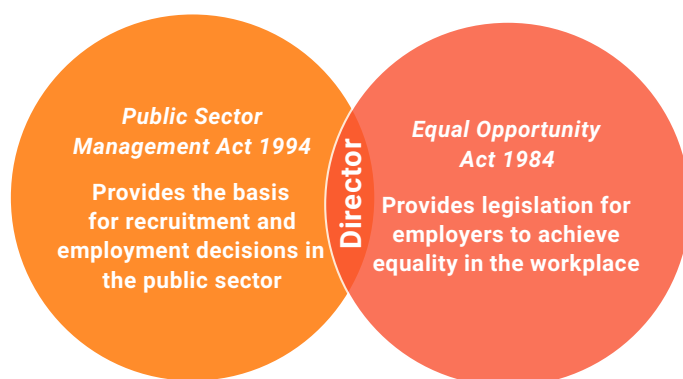
SONJA COX
DIRECTOR OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Role of the Director

The [Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment](#) is an independent statutory officer appointed by the Governor to perform the functions defined in Part IX of the [Equal Opportunity Act 1984](#) (EO Act). The [Public Sector Commission](#) is the accountable authority under the [Financial Management Act 2006](#) (FM Act) and provides the Director with staff, accommodation, corporate services and administrative support.

Figure 1 illustrates the intersection of the role of the Director with the [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) (PSM Act) and EO Act.

Figure 1: Overlapping functions of the Director



While the current Director is an employee of the Commission, the role remains legislatively and jurisdictionally independent.

The Director's jurisdiction extends to all public authorities¹ (hereafter referred to as public organisations) including public sector agencies and government authorities (local government, public universities and other authorities).

A representative workforce

The Director advises and assists public organisations on equal employment opportunity management and workforce planning to build diverse workforces representative of the community.

Inclusive workplaces

The Director encourages inclusive workplace cultures that are free from discrimination and the negative effects of conscious and unconscious bias.

Identifying barriers

Barriers to representation are identified through monitoring and evaluating public organisations' diversity data and strategies for overcoming barriers, and creating diverse and inclusive workplaces.

¹ The term 'authority' is defined by Section 138 of the EO Act and 'public authority' is defined in Section 139(3) of the EO Act. The term 'public sector' is defined in Section 3 of the PSM Act.

Director in review

Thirty five years on...

The EO Act was enacted in 1984 and, with it, the creation of the statutory office of the [Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment](#).

Achievements over the past 35 years include the addition of grounds for discrimination to the EO Act. Breast and bottle feeding parents and transgender people, who have transitioned or are in the process of transitioning, are among those diverse groups now supported in the workplace.

While initiatives to improve diversity in public sector employment have been implemented by many public organisations, actions to accelerate real and sustained change remain a key focus.

Workforce and diversity plans

[Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2017-04](#) encourages public organisations to integrate diversity planning with their broader workforce planning process. This approach encourages thinking about diversity as an important workforce management matter rather than something that sits outside of workforce management.

Integrating workforce and diversity plans reduces the regulatory burden on public organisations by enabling them to meet their legislative obligation under the EO Act to submit to the Director an [Equal Employment Opportunity management plan](#) (EEO management plan). However, as Table 1 indicates, public organisations are not submitting plans, integrated or otherwise, which impacts on their ability to implement strategies to mitigate the risk of discrimination and achieve diversity outcomes.

A new paradigm for workforce diversification

Diversification is important because of rapidly changing technologies and shifts in demographics that increase the importance of contributions from diverse groups. We know that organisations that value diversity have greater employee satisfaction, better customer service outcomes, improved decision making and greater performance.

But to achieve this strategic advantage, we need a new paradigm. We need to examine why past practices have not succeeded, we need to celebrate the work that is delivering results, and we need to shift the focus of diversity from compliance to workforce imperative.

People assume that diversity is about eliminating discrimination in employment – in other words, avoiding the unfair treatment of people from traditionally under-represented 'diversity groups'. However, diversity and inclusion go beyond this to recognising the varied perspectives and approaches that all individuals bring.

The various strategic drivers discussed below frame the new paradigm to diversify WA's public workforce as not only the right thing to do but the sensible thing to do.

Valuing difference empowers people. It enables them to unlock their potential, creating an environment in which a strong, innovative and responsive public workforce is able to thrive. Ultimately, this means increased creativity, productivity, knowledge and, therefore, better services for Western Australians.

Table 1: Workforce and diversity plans by sector at June 2019

Type	Total number	Overdue number	% overdue	Received number	% received
Public sector agencies	117	103	88.0	14	12.0
Local government (including regional councils)	145	120	82.8	25	17.2
Public universities	4	3	75.0	1	25.0
Other authorities	18	13	72.2	5	27.8

Service Priority Review

Workforce diversification is a key outcome in the State Government's [Roadmap for Reform](#) and is linked to the development of "[a capable, high performing workforce that delivers on government and community priorities](#)".

The Service Priority Review emphasised that diversity "requires ongoing commitment from senior leadership, a clear understanding of why workforce diversity is a priority, and a range of interventions appropriate to each diversity group".

It included a recommendation to "strengthen employee capability through better workforce planning and talent management" and more specifically to "adopt a more robust whole-of-sector diversity strategy that better reflects the broader population, including through strategies to increase the representation of Aboriginal people, people with disability and women in senior levels".

The review implored agency leaders, with the support of the Commission, to develop and implement clear, measurable strategies to respond to workforce diversification.

Independent Review of the Public Sector Commission

An [Independent Review of the Public Sector Commission](#) was undertaken by Carmel McGregor PSM from April to July 2018 and tabled in Parliament in October 2018. In relation to workforce diversification, the review highlighted this as an area requiring more sector support. The review also suggested removing the role of the Director from the EO Act and incorporating the functions into the PSM Act. The Government and Commissioner decided that the role of the Director would not be abolished but rather assigned jointly to a second tier executive position in the Commission. It was assigned to the position of Executive Director People, Culture and Diversity in November 2018.

The Commission will continue to support the statutory role of the Director by providing resources to achieve the outcomes of the EO Act.

Review of the delivery of the Director's functions

A review of the delivery of the functions of the Director commenced during 2019 to strategically position the role in promoting the value of workforce diversification in public organisations. The review will improve the effectiveness of the objectives of the role, including greater support and guidance to public organisations on the effectiveness of their strategies and activities, and increased reporting and accountability for performance.

Why workforce diversification matters in public sector employment

The [One Sector Workforce](#) background paper to the Service Priority Review described workforce diversity as "injecting a variety of skills, knowledge, backgrounds and capabilities into an organisation to achieve better outcomes; assist an organisation to meet the needs and expectations of its diverse customer base; and help foster a more inclusive working environment that is attractive to potential employees".

While there has been significant investment over time to improve diversity representation in the WA public sector through strategy, goals, planning, awareness and training, little improvement has been realised.

Strategies to encourage increased representation in public organisations include [Time for action: Diversity and inclusion in public employment](#), [Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people](#) and [See my abilities: An employment strategy for people with disability](#).

As highlighted in the [Independent Review of the Public Sector Commission](#), these strategies "do not appear to be well regarded by the sector or haven't achieved better results for the participation of Aboriginal people or people with disability in public sector employment, or the workforce more generally".

Whole of sector workforce diversification strategy

In 2018/19, the Commission and Director commenced development of a whole-of-sector workforce diversification strategy in response to the Service Priority Review recommendation. The strategy will be supported by action plans for identified diversity groups including women in leadership, Aboriginal Australians, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, young people and mature people, and people with diverse sexuality and genders.

Development of the strategy to date has included extensive research into what works in creating diverse and inclusive workplaces, identifying the barriers to achieving successful outcomes, and the role of targets in setting goals.

The strategy will provide a roadmap to support a diverse public sector workforce that is capable of addressing future employment requirements.

The second stage in developing the strategy will include extensive consultation across the sector, starting in the latter part of 2019.

Senior leaders in public organisations will be asked to implement the strategy through their workforce and diversity plans to drive improved outcomes.

iThink ideas management community

In 2018/19, the Commission procured a new platform and developed an online ideas community called iThink (WA Public Sector) to harness the ideas of the employees. The first challenge, to open in the new financial year, will be for ideas on diversity and inclusion to inform the workforce diversification strategy and associated action plans for diverse groups.

Measures to achieve equality

Understanding the reasons for declining diversity representation, including perceived industrial risks in targeting employment for diverse groups, is critical to overcoming employment barriers.

The Commission is currently developing practical tools and guides to provide clarity and increase the confidence of public organisations to implement the provisions of the EO Act that allow for positive discrimination.

Tools will include short videos on public organisations that are using the provisions well, frequently asked questions about applying the provisions and a guide to recruiting for diversity.

How public organisations can improve diversity

An inclusive, accepting and welcoming workplace has benefits for all staff, not just members of diversity groups. The following actions are consistent with the requirements of the EO Act as well as best practice in human resource management.

Lead by example: Leaders, line managers and frontline supervisors should commit to the principles of diversity and inclusion in their day-to-day work, in recruiting staff and in managing and developing employees. Strong leadership, executive buy-in, and integrated workforce and diversity planning set the tone for commitment to a diverse workforce.

Evaluate and plan: Evaluate your organisation's current situation, past strategies and employment data when developing your integrated workforce and diversity plan. Your organisation is required to have a current plan which is a strong vehicle for change. To maximise the impact of the plan, ensure roles and responsibilities are clear, priorities are communicated throughout the organisation, and specific strategies are aligned to desired business outcomes.

Action the strategies: Every recruitment action is an opportunity to improve the diversity profile in your organisation. Every discussion about performance is an opportunity to reinforce an inclusive culture. You may have a great plan but it is only useful when implemented and embedded. Implementing plans involves project and program management, celebrating achievements and learning from experiences.

Evaluate the outcomes: Monitoring and evaluating workforce and diversity plans can be as simple as quarterly reports on actions or as sophisticated as monthly reporting on indicators relating to staff perceptions about culture. Other methods include a leaderboard on diversity, recruitment activities and the comparative success of diversity groups through all stages of selection processes. You should monitor and evaluate regularly for continuous improvement.

Call to action

You can start today!

1. Develop, submit and implement an integrated workforce and diversity plan.
2. Start the conversation by adding diversity and inclusion to meeting agendas and performance discussions.
3. Interview under-represented employees who meet the minimum requirements of the job.
4. Introduce diversity and inclusion awareness when on-boarding staff, promoting the importance of a diverse workplace.
5. Work from a place of trust and enable your employees to work flexibly.
6. Consider accessible and inclusive workplace facilities and apply the principles of substantive equality to all aspects of service design and delivery.
7. Create a culture of social responsibility through activities that generate collective support such as fundraising for diversity groups.
8. Celebrate significant days and cultural holidays on the diversity and inclusion calendar.
9. Enable and support diverse networking opportunities for staff.
10. Listen to your staff and visibly invest in the diversity and inclusion outcomes they care about.

Challenges in achieving better diversity outcomes

Disclosure

Data relating to the representation of people from diverse groups is currently reliant on employee self-disclosure.

Most agencies surveyed in the Director's annual Equal Employment Opportunity survey (EEO survey) reported that they encourage employees to disclose whether they identify as belonging to a particular diversity group, however the rate of disclosure remains low.

Diversity data is more meaningful when self-disclosure rates are above 70%. This is one of the greatest challenges when developing effective diversity-specific strategies.

Improved disclosure rates assist organisations to better understand their diversity profiles and create strategies and actions specific to their contexts.

Over the coming year, creating cultures where people feel safe and comfortable disclosing information will be a focus for the Director and the Commission.

Access to meaningful data

It is vital for organisations to put in place systems and procedures to collect accurate data about their workforce. High quality, accessible and meaningful workforce data is key to understanding workforce trends.

Over the coming year, the Commission will focus on preparing a data strategy to support accurate data collection across the sector. This will assist in supporting evidence-based decision-making.

Challenges for public organisations

Across all public organisations, there are low rates of:

- workforce and diversity planning
- agency specific diversity targets
- reporting systems for people to identify as genders other than male or female.

The challenge for public organisations is to refocus attention on strategic workforce and diversity planning, which will support happier and more productive workplaces.

Unconscious bias

It is important to acknowledge that we all have biases that influence our attitudes, perceptions and experiences. Conscious and/or unconscious bias in recruitment may result in highly suitable and talented applicants being overlooked. Being aware of these biases is the first step to managing its effects and ensuring diverse and inclusive workplaces.

Over the coming 12 months, the Commission will be exploring the development of specific training to reduce the impact of unconscious bias on recruitment.

Substantive equality

It is important to recognise that the way people interact at work is closely linked to the way they interact with their customers. The Director encourages public organisations to include substantive equality considerations in service delivery as outlined in the Equal Opportunity Commission's [Policy Framework for Substantive Equality](#). This framework includes advice to public organisations to encourage and support cultural diversity and inclusion in workplaces, particularly in service delivery areas.

How do we profile diversity?

EEO survey

Each year, we collect data from public organisations to monitor the representation and distribution of employees from selected diversity groups. As well as supporting public organisations to meet their obligations under the EO Act, this data assists us in evaluating the effectiveness of public organisations' workforce and diversity plans and activities.

In 2018/19, we received [EEO survey](#) data on 252 public sector agencies, local government, public universities and other authorities. Completing the survey remains a challenge due to the complexity of extracting diversity information from various systems and we support public organisations through this process.

We will review the survey format over the next year – in alignment with the Commission's workforce diversification strategy and the revised delivery of the Director's functions – with a view to reducing the burden on public organisations.

Information from this year's EEO survey shows a significant increase in the number of public organisations with strategies and initiatives to improve diversity outcomes including:

- documenting and promoting commitment from leadership such as leadership pledges and public statements about inclusion
- celebrating significant days such as International Women's Day, Pride Week and NAIDOC Week
- developing Aboriginal employment approaches informed by the Commission's [Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people](#)
- undertaking unconscious bias training and awareness raising.

Diversity data disclosure

Employees provide information about whether they identify with a particular diversity group or groups (for example, cultural background and disability) when applying for positions, through on-boarding processes or voluntary questionnaires that may be available to them throughout the year. Employees may choose not to disclose these details.

When an employee voluntarily provides this information, it is deemed to be a valid response. The total number of valid responses may be less than or equal to the total number of employees (headcount) in an organisation. An organisation's number of valid responses is usually less than its total headcount due to employees choosing not to disclose these details or not being provided with the opportunity to do so.

The representation rates of employees in each diversity group is based on the number of valid responses. As such, these rates may fluctuate from year to year through the normal movement of employees through the sector. Diversity data does not follow an employee if they change organisations. Other measures to capture diversity data will be explored by the Commission and Director during the coming year.

Equity index

The equity index indicates the distribution of a diversity group across the salary ranges compared with the distribution of all employees across the same salary ranges. In this report, the equity index compares the distribution of different diversity groups for each of the sectors including public sector agencies, local government, public universities and other authorities.

- An index of 100 indicates the profile of the diversity group reflects the profile of all employees in that sector.
- An index of less than 100 indicates a concentration of employees at the lower salary range.
- An index greater than 100 indicates a concentration of employees at the higher salary range.

If the equity index for a particular group is low, more effort should be made in the advancement of that group.

For example, the equity index of women working across the sector at March 2019 ranged between 74 (local government) and 89 (public universities – general staff). This indicates that there are more women in lower salary bands in these sectors compared to the entire cohort of employees in that sector, and there is still work to be done to support the advancement of women.

Data collection methodology

Since the 2018 EEO survey, public organisations have been provided with two options to submit their workforce data: through the Commission's survey platform or via a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet method called for public organisations to provide a de-identified excerpt from their human resource information system. This was seen to be a more effective method of submitting workforce information.

A proportion of public organisations have chosen to submit their data via the spreadsheet method in the previous reporting period. The change in collection methodology resulted in a more accurate recording of workforce information and facilitated comparability. It may also have contributed to a noticeable difference in results between 2017 and subsequent years.

Public sector entities (including the Police Force and electorate offices) also provide workforce data each quarter through the human resource minimum obligatory information requirement (HRMOIR).

Working age population

The working age for comparative purposes is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as between 15 and 64 years old. The relevant ABS catalogue is cited in each diversity group section on the following pages.

Public sector agency diversity profile

142 278 employees in the WA public sector

Table 3 shows the diversity profile from 2015 to 2019. Despite key diversity strategies being released in 2016, there has been limited progress in representation across most of the diversity groups during this time.

The Director, together with the Commission, aims to address this by focusing on supporting agencies to implement tangible and actionable plans.

Summary of performance:

- Women have represented about 72.8% of the workforce in public sector agencies over the last five years. During this time, there has been some progress in the representation of women in senior executive service positions, with a 4.3 percentage point rise to 36.0% in the last year. Women in the third tier of leadership are very close to parity at 49.1%, followed by tier two at 44.0%.
- Representation of Aboriginal Australians has remained at 2.7% for the last four years, highlighting that opportunities exist to work on attraction and retention strategies.
- Representation of people with disability has trended down over the last five years and is currently at 1.5%. Opportunities exist to support the recruitment of people with disability, and to support people with disability in public employment by increasing awareness and accessibility and making workplace adjustments.
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds represented about 12.5% of the workforce between 2015 and 2017. This increased to 13.1% in 2018 and 13.3% in 2019.
- Young people aged 24 years and under have decreased in representation over the last five years and currently represent 4.2% of the workforce. With young people a valuable resource for the future of public sector agencies, providing youth employment pathways continues to be an important area of focus for workforce planning.
- Representation of people aged 45 years and over remains fairly stable at around 52.5%. Opportunities exist to develop strategies to retain valuable experience and knowledge from retiring employees through mentoring and succession planning.

Table 3: Public sector agency diversity profile 2015 to 2019

Representation	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
Women	72.2	72.3	72.7	72.4	72.8
Men	27.8	27.7	27.3	27.6	27.2
Diverse sexuality and gender	N/A	N/A	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Women in the Senior Executive Service (SES)	31.7	32.9	34.2	33.3	36.0
Women in leadership					
Tier 1	27.3	22.9	22.2	28.8	30.7
Tier 2	36.2	38.2	39.4	43.4	44.0
Tier 3	41.7	42.8	44.5	48.6	49.1
Aboriginal Australians	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
People with disability	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.5
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	12.4	12.6	12.7	13.1	13.3
People 24 and under	4.7	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2
People 45 and over	52.4	52.6	52.6	52.1	52.5

Case study

Health Support Services: Diversity and inclusion strategy

[Health Support Services](#) delivers shared services to support the Western Australian public health system. Its focus is on building a workforce that reflects the diversity of its customers and empowers staff to contribute their best.

In 2019, Health Support Services developed a three-year strategy to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. The strategy is supported by action plans to foster an inclusive workplace culture, and create a productive and high performing organisation. These action plans place a focus on gender representation (particularly women in leadership), age, disability, LGBTQI+, culturally and linguistically diverse people and Aboriginal Australians.

Health Support Services encourages staff to take part in celebratory and awareness events such as

NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day and Wear It Purple Day. Staff are also supplied with lanyards with Aboriginal artwork and rainbow designs as a symbolic gesture of acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity.

In 2019/20, Health Support Services will continue to raise awareness and educate its workforce on the benefits of diversity. This includes initiatives such as Aboriginal cultural awareness training and unconscious bias workshops.

“Diversity ignites creativity, problem solving and innovation, enabling us to strengthen our ‘Think Customer First’ culture and deliver on our organisation’s purpose. Inclusion promotes belonging, purpose and wellbeing and encourages us to bring our true, authentic selves to Health Support Services every day.” – **Robert Toms, Chief Executive Officer**

Diversity snapshots



Celebrate diversity

84% of public sector agencies celebrate significant events such as International Women’s Day, Pride Week and NAIDOC Week.



Cultural awareness and/or diversity training

72% of public sector agencies provide cultural awareness and/or diversity training.



Leadership commitment

58% (up from 44% in 2018) of public sector agencies have a documented leadership commitment to promote diversity and inclusion.

Did you know...



Disclosure

Only 30% of employees in public sector agencies have disclosed. Disclosure has increased by only 10% in the last four years.

Local government diversity profile

23 898 employees in local government

Table 4 shows the diversity profile from 2015 to 2019. Most diversity groups have shown signs of improvement and growth. Local governments separate their data into indoor and outdoor roles which provides an interesting context when viewed against diversity information.

Summary of performance:

- The women in leadership group has shown signs of improvement with a 7.8 percentage point rise in tier 1 (indoor) this year. Tier 3 (indoor) is close to parity at 45.0%. The results for women in outdoor management tiers are much lower than indoor management tiers indicating there are opportunities to focus on outdoor professions.
- Employment of Aboriginal Australians continues to be significantly higher in outdoor employment than indoor employment.
- The representation of people with disability has seen a slight increase since 2018 to 1.4%. Representation continues to be higher for outdoor employment than indoor employment.
- Since 2018, representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds has increased overall. There was a 4.1 percentage point rise to 18.0% for indoor workers.
- While people aged 24 years and under has trended down to 11.7%, this is still a high level of representation. This is higher than the Time for Action goal of 5.0% by 2019.
- The representation of people aged 45 years and over has increased since 2016 and is currently at 48.4%. The increase suggests succession planning and knowledge management need to be a focus in the future.

Table 4: Local government diversity profile 2015 to 2019

Representation	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
Women	53.7	54.1	54.4	54.1	54.5
Men	46.3	45.9	45.6	45.9	45.5
Diverse sexuality and gender	N/A	N/A	0.0	<0.1	<0.1
Women in leadership					
Management tier 1 (Indoor)	12.3	8.8	10.3	11.6	19.4
Management tier 2 (Indoor)	33.0	33.3	35.3	34.4	34.9
Management tier 2 (Outdoor)	6.7	8.6	8.3	10.7	6.0
Management tier 3 (Indoor)	42.8	45.5	41.9	42.7	45.0
Management tier 3 (Outdoor)	7.8	12.4	12.1	14.1	20.2
Aboriginal Australians (total)	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.2	2.5
Indoor	1.2	1.5	1.0	1.6	1.5
Outdoor	4.2	3.9	3.8	4.2	5.6
People with disability (total)	1.5	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.4
Indoor	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.1
Outdoor	2.4	2.5	2.2	1.7	2.2

Representation	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (total)	15.0	16.3	11.3	13.6	16.7
Indoor	15.7	17.9	11.7	13.9	18.0
Outdoor	12.5	12.0	9.0	12.9	12.2
People 24 and under (total)	14.4	13.9	13.3	12.1	11.7
Indoor	16.5	16.2	14.6	13.8	13.1
Outdoor	7.6	6.6	9.6	6.9	7.5
People 45 and over (total)	49.4	45.0	46.9	48.7	48.4
Indoor	45.3	40.4	42.9	44.5	43.8
Outdoor	62.6	59.3	57.8	61.8	62.4

Diversity snapshots



Celebrate diversity

66% of local government authorities celebrate significant diversity days and 17% celebrate cultural holidays.



Zero tolerance

93% of local government authorities have zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment enforced through governance policies.



Cultural awareness and/or diversity training

62% of local government authorities have inclusion strategies and initiatives that include cultural awareness and/or diversity training.



Inclusive language

12% of local government authorities implement inclusive language policies.



Leadership commitment

48% of local government authorities have a documented leadership commitment to promote diversity and inclusion.

Public university diversity profile

21 977 employees in public universities

Table 5 shows the diversity profile from 2015 to 2019. Separating data by the type of employee assists in providing better comparison and greater insight into the diversity profile.

Summary of performance:

- The women in management tier 1 group continues to maintain a strong representation, with tier 2 approaching parity.
- Aboriginal Australian employment has trended upwards in recent years, with a slight difference between academic and general staff. The higher representation in general staff can be explained by lower education requirements, making it an easier entry point for employment.
- The representation of people with disability has steadily grown over the past three years, with overall representation currently at 1.8%. Representation of people with disability has increased in both the academic and general staff groups this year suggesting the implementation of targeted strategies has been effective in achieving outcomes.
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have high representation, specifically for academic staff. Representation dropped between 2017 and 2018, however has started to climb in 2019.

Table 5: Public university diversity profile 2015 to 2019

Representation	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
Women	63.1	60.0	60.0	60.6	57.1
Men	36.9	40.0	40.0	39.3	42.9
Diverse sexuality and gender	N/A	N/A	0.0	<0.1	<0.1
Women in leadership					
Tier 1 (Academic and General)	25.0	25.0	25.0	75.0	75.0
Tier 2 (Academic and General)	29.4	44.4	45.7	45.5	46.7
Tier 3 (Academic and General)	44.5	44.1	45.9	46.1	42.9
Aboriginal Australians (total)	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.5	1.3
Academic	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.2	1.1
General	1.0	1.1	0.8	1.8	1.4
People with disability (total)	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.3	1.8
Academic	1.5	1.8	0.9	0.9	1.9
General	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.8
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (total)	23.7	25.3	14.5	18.8	24.9
Academic	26.4	30.1	15.0	19.2	28.2
General	21.4	22.2	14.1	18.5	22.1
People 24 and under (total)	6.5	7.0	6.7	10.4	9.4
Academic	2.9	2.4	2.1	5.0	4.8
General	9.8	11.0	10.8	15.0	13.5
People 45 and over (total)	33.7	35.7	36.7	41.7	40.6
Academic	36.9	40.2	42.7	46.5	45.1
General	30.8	31.8	31.4	37.4	36.5

Diversity snapshots



Celebrate diversity

All public universities celebrate significant days and most celebrate cultural holidays.



Zero tolerance

All public universities have a zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment enforced through governance policies.



Cultural awareness and/or diversity training

All public universities have inclusion strategies and initiatives that include cultural awareness and/or diversity training.



Inclusive language

Just one of the public universities implements inclusive language policies.



Leadership commitment

A documented leadership commitment to promote diversity and inclusion is in place at all public universities.

Other authority diversity profile

15 949 employees in other authorities

Table 6 shows the diversity profile from 2015 to 2019.

Summary of performance:

- The representation of women in leadership is increasing across all tiers of management, however is still below public sector agencies, local government and universities. Senior leadership is key to achieving change, which is supported with 73.3% of authorities having senior leaders who visibly lead and commit to gender diversity initiatives, as indicated in the 2019 EEO survey results.
- The representation of Aboriginal Australians has nearly doubled over the five years to 2.7% this year.
- People with disability representation has improved over the past five years to 1.6% this year.
- The representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds has increased to 13.7% this year.

Table 6: Other authority diversity profile 2015 to 2019

Representation	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
Women	28.5	28.9	29.1	29.4	30.0
Men	71.5	71.1	70.9	70.6	70.0
Diverse sexuality and gender	N/A	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0
Women in leadership					
Management Tier 1	5.9	11.8	11.8	12.5	17.9
Management Tier 2	19.0	23.5	22.8	26.4	31.4
Management Tier 3	24.4	21.4	31.9	30.3	32.4
Aboriginal Australians	1.5	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.7
People with disability	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	12.5	13.4	12.3	12.0	13.7
People 24 and under	6.3	5.0	4.5	4.2	3.8
People 45 and over	41.7	43.5	42.6	43.7	43.2

Diversity snapshots



Celebrate diversity

93% of other authorities celebrate significant days and 53% celebrate cultural holidays.



Zero tolerance

100% of other authorities have zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment enforced through governance policies.



Cultural awareness and/or diversity training

Inclusion strategies and initiatives that include cultural awareness and/or diversity training are in place for 73% of other authorities.



Inclusive language

20% of other authorities implement inclusive language policies.



Leadership commitment

A documented leadership commitment to promote diversity and inclusion is in place for 73% of other authorities.

Women

Social policy for women focuses on equality, choice and participation. It recognises women as valued contributors to the social, economic, political and public institutions.

A key aspect of workforce representation concentrates on the importance of achieving equal gender representation and the rights of women to participate in decision-making across all levels of government.

Low representation of women in leadership continues to be an ongoing issue globally and at home. Australia is ranked 39th in the [World Economic Forum's Global Gender Pay Gap Report 2018](#). Rankings are based on economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

Some of the challenges considered to potentially influence the representation of women in the workforce are leave entitlements, pay and flexibility. The [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) states that Australia is among the lowest of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in relation to parental leave entitlements including duration, pay and flexibility.

Closer to home, the WA public sector has among the lowest representation of women in leadership nationally despite having the highest representation of women generally at 72.7%.

The data from this reporting period indicates the representation of women in leadership (management tiers 1 to 3) across all public organisations was 40.1%. Public universities are leading the way in tier 1, with three of the four vice chancellors being female.

While women in management tier 3 in public sector agencies and universities tier 2 are close to parity, there is opportunity for other public organisations to improve their representation profiles.

At the current rate of growth, parity for women in the Senior Executive Service (SES) will not be achieved until 2035. This timeframe is not acceptable.

The poor representation of women in leadership indicates that more needs to be done in this area. The Commission's workforce diversification strategy will address this issue.

Table 7: Comparative summary of the diversity profile for women 2015 to 2019

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	Equity Index
Public sector agency						
Women	72.2	72.3	72.7	72.4	72.8	76
Women in SES	31.7	32.9	34.2	33.3	36.0	
Women in leadership						
Tier 1	27.3	22.9	22.2	28.8	30.7	
Tier 2	36.2	38.2	39.4	43.4	44.0	
Tier 3	41.7	42.8	44.5	48.6	49.1	
Local government						
Women (Indoor)	65.9	66.5	67.0	66.1	66.1	74
Women (Outdoor)	14.3	15.5	20.1	17.0	18.8	74

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	Equity Index
Women in leadership						
Tier 1 (Indoor)	12.3	8.8	10.3	11.6	19.4	
Tier 2 (Indoor)	33.0	33.3	35.3	34.4	34.9	
Tier 2 (Outdoor)	6.7	8.6	8.3	10.7	6.0	
Tier 3 (Indoor)	42.8	45.5	41.9	42.7	45.0	
Tier 3 (Outdoor)	7.8	12.4	12.1	14.1	20.2	
Public university						
Women	63.1	60.0	60.0	60.6	57.1	
Women (Academic)	59.6	52.5	52.8	53.5	54.3	81
Women (General)	66.4	66.4	66.5	66.9	59.6	89
Women in leadership						
Tier 1 (Academic and General)	25.0	25.0	25.0	75.0	75.0	
Tier 2 (Academic and General)	29.4	44.4	45.7	45.5	46.7	
Tier 3 (Academic and General)	44.5	44.1	45.9	46.1	42.9	
Other authority						
Women	28.5	31.7	32.2	29.4	30.0	80
Women in leadership						
Tier 1	5.9	11.8	11.8	12.5	17.9	
Tier 2	19.0	23.5	22.8	26.4	31.4	
Tier 3	24.4	21.4	31.8	30.3	32.4	

Diversity snapshots



Representation of women in universities

Women hold 54.3% of academic positions and 59.6% of general positions.



Women in management tier 3 in public sector agencies

Women in management tier 3 in public sector agencies is close to parity at 49.1%.



WA pay gap

The pay gap in public sector agencies (11.5%) is higher than the Australian public sector pay gap (10.4%).



Representation of women in local government

Women comprise 66.1% of indoor and 18.8% outdoor workers in local government.



Parity 2035

Without any additional effort, parity for women in SES of public sector agencies is not expected to occur until 2035.

Case studies

WorkCover WA: Workforce and diversity strategies

[WorkCover WA](#) developed a workforce and diversity plan in 2018 using the Commission's [workforce planning toolkit](#) to ensure it was aligned with whole-of-sector priorities. The plan includes a strategy to use flexible work practices to encourage more women to apply for senior leadership and management positions. Part of developing the plan included listening to women's experiences and challenges in progressing their careers. The outcome of these conversations was presented to WorkCover's corporate executive. An example of an action developed through the process has been to include women on maternity leave in the WorkCover's forward planning initiatives. Women on leave are also informed of all employment opportunities.

City of Canning: Breastfeeding friendly workplace

The [City of Canning](#) has established breastfeeding facilities available to employees, contractors and volunteers, and recognises the importance and benefits of breastfeeding to working women and their babies. The City is now accredited with the Australian Breastfeeding Association as a 'Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace'.

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage: Flexible working arrangements

Under the leadership of Director General Gail McGowan, the [Department](#) is taking practical steps to increase the number of women in its Senior Executive Service (SES). An example is enabling one of the Department's Assistant Directors General, Lorissa Kelly, to return to work with flexible arrangements. This is one of the first such arrangements for a member of the SES in a public sector agency.

"These types of arrangements have to work for both the individual and the organisation. Being given the option to return to my role with flexible work arrangements (three days in the office and the remainder of the role completed remotely) demonstrates real leadership and a pragmatic approach to progressing diversity in our agency." –

Lorissa Kelly, Assistant Director General

Call to action

Change the future for women in your organisation by:

- providing flexible work arrangements (including at senior levels of management) and other arrangements like remote working and job-sharing
- encouraging and sponsoring women to undertake executive development
- identifying women for acting opportunities, secondments and career-enhancing projects
- including women in leadership and decision-making.

Using the EO Act provisions

Provisions in the [EO Act](#) enable employers to achieve equality by targeting diverse groups. For example, an employer may specify one gender over another for a position where it is a genuine occupational qualification such as a female breast screen radiographer.

The EO Act also allows an employer to implement strategies to support equity outcomes for diverse groups. For example, affording people of a particular gender or marital status, or who are pregnant, access to facilities, services and opportunities to meet their employment needs. This may include making a room available in the workplace for breastfeeding mothers.

Another example is specifically recruiting for women police officers and firefighters.

Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is the difference between the median salary of men and women. The median salary of men in public sector employment remains higher than that of women, however the difference decreased in the 12 months to March 2019.

Table 8 shows the change in gender pay levels in the public sector from March 2018 to March 2019.

The gender pay gap will be part of the Commission's action plan for women in the workforce diversification strategy.

Table 8: Gender pay gap in the public sector at March 2018 and 2019

Median salary (contracts)	March 2018	March 2019	Change (\$)
All employees	\$85 052	\$85 175	\$123
Women	\$81 797	\$82 797	+\$1000
Men	\$93 341	\$93 548	+\$207
Gender pay gap	\$11 544	\$10 751	-\$793

Aboriginal Australians

The employment rate of Aboriginal Australians in the public sector has not increased since the last reporting period. However, there have been improvements in the representation of Aboriginal Australians over the last five years in local government and other authorities. The 2019 EEO survey results showed that more public organisations focused on Aboriginal Australians than any other diversity group.

While the representation of Aboriginal Australians in academic positions in public universities is below the representation in the working age population for WA, an equity index of 248 indicates that they are in high salary positions.

The majority of local government and other authorities reported having fully or partially implemented strategies to encourage Aboriginal Australians to self-identify. Self-disclosure for these sectors is high, showing an increase since 2017.

In the coming year, the Commission will develop ways to support employees to feel comfortable disclosing their Aboriginality. It will look to universities, other authorities and local government to learn from their success. It will also look at the distribution of diversity across salary bands to understand how to support Aboriginal Australians progress their careers.

Table 9: Aboriginal Australian community representation 2015 to 2019

Representation (%) of the working age population	Australia	Western Australia
Aboriginal Australians	3.0	3.8

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Catalogue 3238.0 Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026.

Table 10: Comparative summary of the diversity profile for Aboriginal Australians

	2015 \$	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	Equity Index
Public sector agency						
Aboriginal Australians	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	40
Local government						
Aboriginal Australians (total)	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.2	2.5	N/A
Indoor	1.2	1.5	1.0	1.6	1.5	45
Outdoor	4.2	3.9	3.8	4.2	5.6	69
Public university						
Aboriginal Australians (total)	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.5	1.3	N/A
Academic	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.2	1.1	248
General	1.0	1.1	0.8	1.8	1.4	70
Other authority						
Aboriginal Australians	1.5	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.7	52

[Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people](#), developed by the Commission, contains actions to improve Aboriginal employment rates and career pathways in the public sector. The strategy's primary goal is to improve retention of Aboriginal Australian staff as well as their representation at all levels.

In December 2018, the Commission sponsored a group of six senior Aboriginal public servants to attend the [ANZSOG Indigenous Public Servant Forum in Canberra](#). They took part in a round table discussion on key issues for improving the position of Indigenous people in public services. Further to this, the Commission promoted a second forum in February 2019, entitled [Reimagining Public Administration](#). A number of plenaries, parallel sessions and keynote speakers challenged delegates to reimagine public sector leadership, government–community relationships, and policymaking.

Seven years of delivering the Aboriginal traineeship program

The Commission continues to deliver the Aboriginal traineeship program, providing an opportunity for Aboriginal people under 24 years of age to work and complete a Certificate III in Government during their employment in the public sector.

After seven years in operation, the program was evaluated to determine whether it has met its objectives, and to inform the delivery of future programs. The evaluation found that the program performed well in relation to its overall contribution to Aboriginal employment in the WA public sector, with 212 trainees completing the qualification and 146 of them being retained in employment following the program.

The program continues to be a success with 100% of trainees from the 2018 cohort completing traineeships and graduating with formal qualifications. Plans are underway to increase the number of trainees in the 2019/20 financial year.

Case Study

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage: Improving Aboriginal employment opportunity

The [Department](#) applied Section 51 of the EO Act to recruit a Director Strategic Projects (Aboriginal Senior Executive Service). The position was initially created as a two-year development opportunity for emerging Aboriginal leaders in keeping with the Commission's Attract, appoint, advance: Employment strategy for Aboriginal people.

Exclusively seeking Aboriginal applicants attracted a strong field of candidates that delivered two suitable applicants – one appointed to the advertised role and another appointed to a similar role.

The Department's succession planning strategy is supporting both employees to develop through to senior executive positions.

WA Country Health Service: Aboriginal trainee succeeds

Mandi entered the [WA Country Health Service](#) through the Commission's Aboriginal traineeship program. She was employed as a receptionist at its Bennett Street office which accommodates around 200 administrative, professional and management-level staff. Mandi performed well in her studies and demonstrated exceptional skills in her role including providing advice to visitors and solving problems for building occupants.

Once trainees have completed a government traineeship, they can be registered with the Commission's [traineeship transition to employment, recruitment and referral service](#). Agencies can then access them to directly appoint to entry level positions. The service has enabled Mandi and other trainees to be appointed to entry level positions in the sector.

Jawun Indigenous Corporate Partnerships

Established in 2001, Jawun (which means 'friend' in the Kuku Yalanji language of Mossman Gorge) is an innovative not-for-profit organisation. Jawun partners with Indigenous communities to empower Indigenous-led change and foster meaningful connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The Commission, in partnership with Jawun, provides opportunities for public sector leaders to be seconded to Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley. The program generates cultural awareness at a high level in the sector and contributes to Aboriginal economic advancement.

In 2018/19, the Commission continued this partnership, giving two public sector leaders at Level 7 and above an opportunity to gain valuable insights into Aboriginal culture and service delivery in Aboriginal communities. Applications for the 2019 program closed on 20 June.

Advancing careers in leadership

Scholarships and support are offered to advance the careers of Aboriginal public sector employees to participate in the Commission's development programs such as Leadership Essentials, Policy Essentials and the Graduate Development Program. In the reporting period, the Commission provided seven scholarships for the Graduate Development Program to Aboriginal students.

Call to action

Change the future for Aboriginal Australians in your organisation by:

- targeting Aboriginal employees for acting promotional positions, secondments and career-enhancing projects
- providing professional development and clear career pathways
- providing flexible employment practices to balance work and cultural commitments
- increasing cultural awareness
- engaging Aboriginal employees in decision-making
- supporting Aboriginal employees with culturally sensitive avenues to raise and address concerns about their work situation.

Diversity snapshots



Disclosure increasing

The rate of employees disclosing whether or not they identify as Aboriginal Australian is increasing and is currently 73.6% for the public sector agencies.



Public sector agencies implementing 'Attract, appoint and advance'

Public sector agencies implementing 'Attract, appoint and advance', continue to have a higher representation of Aboriginal Australians.



Highest priority

A larger number of public universities, local government and public sector agencies focused on the representation of Aboriginal Australians than other diversity groups.



Flexible work practices

Local government, universities and other authorities increased their focus on providing flexible work practices to assist Aboriginal Australians (from 47% in 2017 to 58.5% in 2019).

People with disability

Public universities and other authorities have seen an upwards trend in the representation of people with disability. Local government outdoor workers have the highest representation with 2.2% and public university academic workers follow with 1.9% representation. Outdoor work generally has lower employment barriers and greater flexibility which may partially explain the higher representation of people with disability. However, representation is still not comparable to the WA working age population, and does not reflect employment at higher salary ranges.

When considering public sector agencies representation of people with disability remains low although the equity index remains high in this reporting period. This means that, of the people with disability employed in public sector agencies, there is a more equitable distribution across salary levels.

The Commission and the Director benchmark the employment of people with disability against the 'core activity limitation (moderate or mild)' category as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This means people with disability needing assistance due to 'moderate' or 'mild' core activity limitations. Core activity limitations are based on whether a person needs help, has difficulty, or uses aids or equipment with any of the core activities (mobility, self-care and communication). A person's overall level of core activity limitation is determined by their highest level of limitation in these activities.

Table 11: Community representation for people with disability

Representation (%) of the working age population	Public sector	Western Australia
People with disability	6.3	5.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Catalogue 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015.

Table 12: Comparative summary of the diversity profile for people with disability 2015 to 2019

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	Equity Index
Public sector agency						
People with disability	2.2	2.0	1.9^	1.5	1.5	99.7
Local government						
People with disability (total)	1.5	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.4	N/A
Indoor	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.1	84.8
Outdoor	2.4	2.5	2.2	1.7	2.2	62.9
Public university						
People with disability (total)	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.3	1.8	N/A
Academic	1.5	1.8	0.9	0.9	1.9	63.0
General	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.8	122.7
Other authority						
People with disability	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	87.9

^ In 2017, the former Department of Corrective Services incorrectly reported 194 employees as having disability. This means the figure for 2017 reflects an over-representation of people with disability in public sector agencies.

Inclusive workplace practices that enable people with disability to reach their full potential are fundamental to improving social and economic participation – and the delivery of services to our community.

People with disability are under-represented in public organisations. A disability may or may not be visible; misconceptions about people with disability may shape the way people act and engage with people with disability in the workplace.

Improving employment outcomes for people with disability is a key priority for the State Government, in line with the [National Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#). As the State's largest employer, the WA public sector has a unique opportunity to lead by example in the area of employment of people with disability, enabling them to bring their valuable experiences and skills to workplaces.

See my abilities: An employment strategy for people with disability

[See my abilities: An employment strategy for people with disability](#) provides a cohesive set of actions to assist public organisations to attract, recruit, retain and develop people with disability. Three priority areas are providing opportunities, promoting awareness and preparing organisations. The strategy includes tangible actions to increase the number of people with disability employed and retained in public employment.

Adult people with disability traineeship program (pilot)

This pilot program was developed and implemented in 2018. It enabled five people registered with a disability employment service provider to study for a nationally accredited qualification. The pilot progressed through the reporting year and is due to end in December 2019. A review will be undertaken following the completion of the pilot to inform any future program implementation.

National Disability Services (NDS) partnership

This year, the Commission negotiated a partnership with the NDS to deliver its 'Build the Talent Pool' project. This project was enabled by the Department of Communities' Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grant.

The partnership included hosting an NDS staff member one day a week. The staff member commenced in June, working on initiatives such as developing disability confident recruiter training for public organisations and mentoring programs for people with disability employed in the public sector.

Case study

Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety: Trainee gets permanent position

Over the last two years, the [Department](#) has focused on ensuring people with disability have equal access to employment and development opportunities.

Anthony was offered a traineeship to complete the Certificate III in Government (Public Administration) – and it was soon apparent that he had good skills outside of administration. He was asked to apply

his skills and experience in multimedia design and production to education and training projects for the Safety Regulation Group and his work was outstanding.

When he completed his traineeship, he was nominated for appointment to a permanent position through the Commission's [traineeship transition to employment, recruitment and referral](#) service. He has since been identified for a higher level acting opportunity.

Call to action

Change the future for people with disability in your organisation by:

- using measures to achieve equality (Section 66R of the EO Act) to employ more people with disability
- developing a culture where people feel safe and supported to disclose if they have disability
- supporting people with disability in acting opportunities, secondments and career-enhancing projects
- using the Commission's [traineeship transition to employment, recruitment and referral service](#) to identify and employ people with disability
- developing people responsible for recruitment to become 'disability confident' recruiters
- supporting staff with disability by providing networking and development opportunities.

Diversity snapshots



Second highest priority

Of the diversity groups, people with disability was the second highest focus for strategic actions by local government, universities and other authorities.



Higher representation

Public sector agencies have higher representation for people with disability than local government, universities and other authorities .



Increased disclosure

The rate of employees disclosing whether they have disability is increasing and is currently 73.8% in the public sector.



Accessibility of information

70% of local government, public universities and other authorities have fully or partially used strategies to ensure accessibility of information.

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

There has been an increase in the representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds across public organisations.

Representation is most notable in public universities with 24.9%, which is better than WA's representation in the working age population. This is closely followed by local government with 16.7% representation.

Responses across public organisations indicate that reporting cultural diversity is rising, with a 70.9% response rate. Very few public organisations

have reported a strategic focus on increasing the representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, although the increasing multiculturalism of the WA community is noted. In the coming year, the Commission will increase focus in this area to ensure it becomes a workforce priority.

During the year, the Commission provided input into the State Government's Multicultural Policy Framework led by the [Office of Multicultural Interests](#).

Table 13: Community representation for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Representation (%) of the working age population	Australia	Western Australia
Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	24.9	24.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Catalogue 2071.0 Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia - Stories from the Census, 2016

Table 14: Comparative summary of the diversity profile for culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds 2015 to 2019

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	Equity Index
Public sector agency						
Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	12.4	12.6	12.7	13.1	13.3	102.4
Local government						
Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (total)	15.0	16.3	11.3	13.6	16.7	N/A
Indoor	15.7	17.9	11.7	13.9	18.0	102.8
Outdoor	12.5	12.0	9.9	12.9	12.2	81.7
Public university						
Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (total)	23.7	25.3	14.5	18.8	24.9	N/A
Academic	26.4	30.1	15.0	19.2	28.2	102.5
General	21.4	22.2	14.1	18.5	22.1	88.8
Other authority						
Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	12.5	13.4	12.3	12.0	13.7	125.9

Case study

City of Canning: Implementation of the Kaleidoscope Mentoring Program

The [City of Canning](#) partnered with the City of Stirling and Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre to deliver the [Kaleidoscope Mentoring Program](#). The program is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services for a three-year period to 30 June 2021.

The program aims to help highly-skilled migrant and refugee professionals (newcomers) to improve their employment potential by connecting them with mentors from their industries and occupations.

Mentors guide newcomers on a pathway to find employment in their industries. This benefits both

the newcomers and employers by sharing new ideas and boosting business development and cultural diversity in both the workplace and community.

"I was very lucky to have a group of mentors from the People and Performance team of the City of Canning under the program. I was mentored in human resources to link my overseas human resources knowledge with Australian practice, prepare my resume, understand how the employment process works in Australia and even how to face a job interview. After participating in this program I have become very confident and have had far better results in my job search." – **Naimul, participant of the Kaleidoscope Mentoring Program**

Call to action

Change the future for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in your organisation by:

- using the provisions in the EO Act to employ people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- seeking applicants in your recruitment pools who reflect the community your organisation serves
- making selection processes more inclusive for non-English speaking candidates
- providing broad cultural diversity training for your staff
- focusing on increasing disclosure rates by creating a culture where people feel safe to be themselves at work
- celebrating significant days and cultural holidays (for example Harmony Week)
- considering establishing a multi-faith prayer room.

Diversity snapshots



Representation

Representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is most notable in public universities at 24.9%.



Increased disclosure

Responses across public organisations indicate that reporting cultural diversity is rising, with a 70.9% response rate.

Age: People 24 years and under (youth) and 45 years and over (mature)

Among the responses to the [EEO survey](#), youth diversity was the second most focused-on diversity area. Despite this, based on the data in Table 16, there appears to be a reduction in the representation of young people in all sectors except public universities.

Most youth are engaged on fixed term contracts or casually rather than in permanent positions. For example, more than 90% of youth employed at Edith Cowan University and The University of Western

Australia are casuals. Data from the public sector is captured on a quarterly basis and only reflects those people in current employment at the end of each quarter. Therefore, the data is less likely to capture the full extent of employment of youth throughout the quarter.

The success of youth employment in public universities and local government will be studied in the coming year to learn from their experiences.

Table 15: Community representation for age

Representation (%) of the working age population	Australia	Western Australia
Youth (24 and under)	19.7	18.8
Mature (45 to 64)	37.2	37.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Catalogue 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics.

Table 16: Comparative summary of the diversity profile for youth and mature workers 2015 to 2019

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 &	2018 %	2019 %
Public sector agency					
People 24 and under	4.7	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2
People 45 and over	52.4	52.6	52.6	52.1	52.5
Local government					
People 24 and under (total)	14.4	13.9	13.3	12.1	11.7
Indoor	16.5	16.2	14.6	13.8	13.1
Outdoor	7.6	6.6	9.6	6.9	7.5
People 45 and over (total)	49.4	45.0	46.9	48.7	48.4
Indoor	45.3	40.4	42.9	44.5	43.8
Outdoor	62.6	59.3	57.8	61.8	62.4
Public university					
People 24 and under (total)	6.5	7.0	6.7	10.4	9.4
Academic	2.9	2.4	2.1	5.0	4.8
General	9.8	11.0	10.8	15.0	13.5
People 45 and over (total)	33.7	35.7	36.7	41.7	40.6
Academic	36.9	40.2	42.7	46.5	45.1
General	30.8	31.8	31.4	37.4	36.5
Other authority					
People 24 and under	6.3	5.0	4.5	4.2	3.8
People 45 and over	41.7	43.5	42.6	43.7	43.2

Youth

Public sector entry level employment programs are aimed at young people aged 24 years and younger who are seeking to enter the public sector workforce.

The employment of youth is an important workforce strategy aligned to the [WA State Training Plan 2018-2021](#) that enables public organisations to respond to long term workforce demands.

The Commission's entry level employment programs include streams for school based traineeships and full time traineeships. They also include a retention initiative where trainees who have graduated may be eligible to go into an entry level employment pool through the Commission's [traineeship transition to employment recruitment and referral service](#). The service can be accessed to fill vacant entry level positions (level 1 fixed term and permanent) across the public sector. Traineeships prepare young people for careers in the public sector by teaching a broad range of public administrative skills. They provide participants with a nationally recognised Certificate II or III in Government (Public Administration).

The participation rate for 15 to 24 year olds (often referred to as the 'youth' group in the national labour

market) increased 0.2 percentage points to 68.4%.

The unemployment rate for this group remained steady at 12.0% in July 2019 and has increased by 0.7% since July last year, as reported by the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#).

The Commission encourages and works with public organisations to develop their own programs to attract young people. This financial year, the Commission has supported public organisations to directly appoint young people to more than 100 entry level employment vacancies.

Mature workers

The Australian Bureau of Statistics identifies mature people as those aged 45 to 64 years. It is estimated that mature people make up 37.3% of the working age population in WA. Given a significant proportion of the public sector workforce is in the mature category, there is a pressing need to capture the knowledge and experience of older workers. The development of innovative ways to invest in and retain mature aged talent will be part of the Commission's strategy going forward.

Case study

Main Roads Western Australia: Intergenerational workforce strategies

[Main Roads](#) encourages intergenerational workforce relationships through its knowledge management strategy. Mature managers share their skills,

knowledge and experiences with employees 'in development' (graduate engineers and engineering associates) through a formal mentoring program. Employees in development gain advice, guidance and support from mature senior staff so they can achieve career goals, understand Main Roads' culture, and reach their full potential.

Call to action

Change the future for youth and mature people in your organisation by:

- identifying clear career pathways
- embedding flexible working arrangements to support transition to retirement and transference of corporate knowledge, as well as supporting young employees' work and life preferences
- evaluating your 'brand image' with prospective employees to assess potential factors limiting the ability to attract younger workers
- providing entry level positions in your organisational structure
- increasing opportunities for cadetships and graduate programs that offer pathways to ongoing employment.

Diversity snapshots



Type of employment

Most youth are engaged on fixed term contracts or casually rather than in permanent positions.



Mature representation

Mature people make up 37.3% of the working age population in WA..

People with diverse sexualities and genders

Australian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals and communities face a number of shared and distinct health and social inclusion issues. They experience poorer health outcomes and reduced social engagement due to actual or perceived prejudice. The Commission is working to create safe, supportive and inclusive public sector workplaces for people with diverse sexualities and genders.

Public universities have a focus on policies and strategies to build inclusion, visibility and equity for people with diverse sexualities and genders. In the year to come, the successful actions of universities will be examined to determine their applicability across the broader workforce.

To support public organisations to develop and sustain inclusive workplace cultures where diverse sexualities and genders are accepted, affirmed and celebrated, the Commission continues to be a member of [Pride in Diversity](#), a peak body offering a range of services to assist employers with all aspects of LGBTI inclusion. This membership provides the

Commission with important training, development and advisory services.

LGBTI review

While the [EEO survey](#) revealed that 72.5% of public organisations have systems that support employees to identify with diverse sexualities and genders, less than 0.1% of people choose to do so. All four public universities in WA make this option available.

The survey revealed that few public organisations have targeted strategies to support diverse sexualities and genders. The Director will work with public organisations and provide resources and tools to help them develop inclusion, visibility and equity.

Call to action

Change the future for people with diverse sexualities and genders in your organisation by:

- providing staff with the opportunity to identify as a gender other than male or female
- developing policies and strategies to build LGBTI inclusion, visibility and equity
- providing awareness, training and resources to staff
- focusing on increasing disclosure rates by creating a culture where staff feel safe to be themselves at work
- enabling and promoting networking and support opportunities for advocates and LGBTI staff.

Diversity snapshot



Supportive work environment

EEO survey revealed 72.5% of public organisations have systems that support employees to identify with diverse sexualities and genders. Less than 0.1% of people choose to do so.

Case studies

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation: Converge International

The [Department](#) values diversity and seeks to create an inclusive workplace and culture where staff feel comfortable to be their 'whole selves' at work.

During the 2017 marriage plebiscite it became evident that being a 'whole self' at work was not easy for some staff. As a result, the Department initiated support for LGBTI staff and promoted greater inclusion.

A specialist employee assistance program helpline was set up with Converge International. The dedicated helpline provided access to a specialist counsellor and support for matters specific to LGBTI people. The helpline also provided referral to specialised services and general information and resources. The helpline was accessed by staff during the time of the marriage plebiscite and is still a valued source of support for staff today.

This year, the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) was celebrated at the Department with a special presentation from community organisation Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). PFLAG supports parents and loved ones of LGBTIQI+ people by helping them understand, come to terms with and celebrate their children, friends and relatives.

The Department is working on an anonymous employee census on diversity and inclusion to collect a more accurate snapshot of its staff. The census will give staff a safe place to voice their experiences and inform future initiatives.

The Department is also working to add alternative options for gender identification in its human resource information system and forms to allow staff to report as an X (other than male or female).

The University of Western Australia: Top employer

The [University of Western Australia](#) was awarded platinum status and listed in the top five employers nationwide for LGBTI inclusion in the 2019 Australian Workplace Equality Index managed by [Pride in Diversity](#).

It is the only university to be consistently included in the top 10 list since the award's inception in 2011. The index, which provides a national benchmark for LGBTI workplace inclusion, is designed to gauge the impact of inclusion initiatives on the culture of organisations.

Key achievements include establishing Australia's first university network for bisexual staff, students and alumni; implementing the first study of the [LGBTIQI+](#) student experiences at an Australian university; and developing a transgender policy to protect the rights of staff and students.

"It was a great achievement for us to be recognised as an employer of choice for diversity and inclusion. Building a culture of respect where diversity is celebrated and staff and students can achieve their full potential is a top priority for the University." –

Professor Dawn Freshwater, Vice-Chancellor

Foundations for change

During the reporting period, the representation of diverse groups across public organisations has generally not improved, despite targeted strategies.

The Director acknowledges that a clear direction for the WA public sector is needed if the downward trend is to be reversed. The sector-wide workforce diversification strategy, currently in draft by the Commission, aims to provide that direction. It will be designed to support more inclusive leadership across public organisations in line with [State Government reform](#) priorities.

To achieve change, we need to set clear expectations, support public organisations to get there and make them accountable. This is why the Commission is committed to:

- developing a strategy with targets and tangible action plans in consultation with public organisations
- providing better data and information to public organisations to support their planning and strategy development
- increasing accountability for performance by strengthening public sector agency CEO performance management.

The Commission will lead the implementation of the workforce diversification strategy in the new reporting year, supported by practical solutions to achieve workforce diversification.

The Director will continue to champion a more equitable and inclusive workforce to guide the future of work in public organisations and the delivery of services to Western Australians.

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