



GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2021 -2025

# Progress Report

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2023

We're hooked on  
**SAFETY**

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## Aboriginal acknowledgement

The Victorian Fisheries Authority proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples, and as the custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We recognise the strength of Aboriginal people, Traditional Owners and their communities, and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people to Victorian life, through their daily work, their application of Aboriginal knowledge and practice, and at key events; we recognise how this enriches us all.

We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities are diverse and should be celebrated.

We acknowledge that the land and water is of spiritual, cultural and economic importance to Aboriginal people. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, guaranteeing equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

As part of the Victorian Government, we have distinct legislative obligations to Victorian Traditional Owner groups related to cultural and natural heritage, that are paramount in our responsibilities in managing Victoria's resources in partnership with Traditional Owners.

## Foreword by Board Chair and CEO

VFA's *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 – 2025* helps us achieve our vision for gender equality and in the process achieve greater innovation, a broader perspective, and better reflect the Victorian community.

This document shares the progress we have made over the first two years of the GEAP.

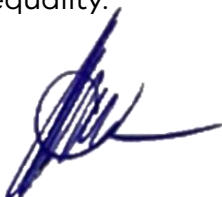
On 30 September 2024 the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner advised us that our progress report and progress audit for the period of 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023 were compliant under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (the Act).

We are proud that we have made reasonable and material progress towards greater gender equality. We have:

- significantly narrowed the overall pay gap for total remuneration from 2021 (11.8%) to 2023 (4.0%),
- taken a risk management approach to sexual harassment with a decrease in People Matter Survey respondents saying they have experienced sexual harassment from 9% to 5%,
- increased the number of women:
  - representing new recruits from 44% to 59%,
  - undertaking career development/training from 17% to 38%, and
  - in the occupation category of Managers from 41% to 47%
- increased the uptake of flexible working arrangements with 53% of staff now on a formal arrangement with a gender composition of 50% men and 50% women.

We know we still have a long way to go and believe that the strategies and actions that have been undertaken in the first two years are helping to build a foundation for further progress over the final two years of the GEAP 2021 – 2025 and beyond. We thank our staff for the roles they have played in the implementation of the GEAP.

Our Board and executive leaders remain committed to achieving our vision for gender equality.



Graeme Dear  
Board Chair



Travis Dowling  
Chief Executive Officer

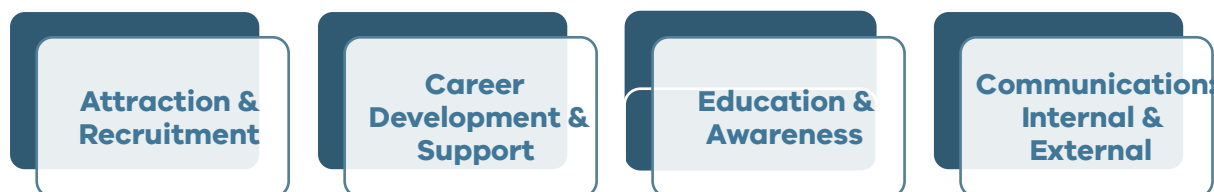
## Vision for Gender Equality

### Our vision for gender equality

Our vision for gender equality is to have a workplace with:

- greater mix of diversity to achieve a better dynamic, greater innovation, a broader perspective, and to reflect the Victorian community;
- equal opportunities for all in recruitment, flexibility, career development and training, equitable pay and conditions; and
- more women in leadership positions (including executives) with clear pathways to leadership.

In our Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2025 (GEAP) we committed to making reasonable and material progress for each of the seven gender equality indicators as per the Act to achieve greater gender equality. We identified four focus areas to guide the implementation of gender equality actions over the four years of the plan.



Most strategies and measures implemented from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023 were through the VFA People and Culture Team led by the Chief Operating Officer while delivering business as usual activities. To assist in the ongoing implementation of the GEAP an additional part time resource has been engaged to focus on strategies and actions for the remaining implementation of the GEAP 2021 - 2025.

The following sections in this document present the information provided in the VFA's progress template report to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, which is also available on the VFA website. It reflects progress as shown in the required sections of the Commission's reporting template: Workplace Gender Equality Indicators, Strategies and Actions and Gender Impact Assessments.

## Workplace Gender Equality Indicators

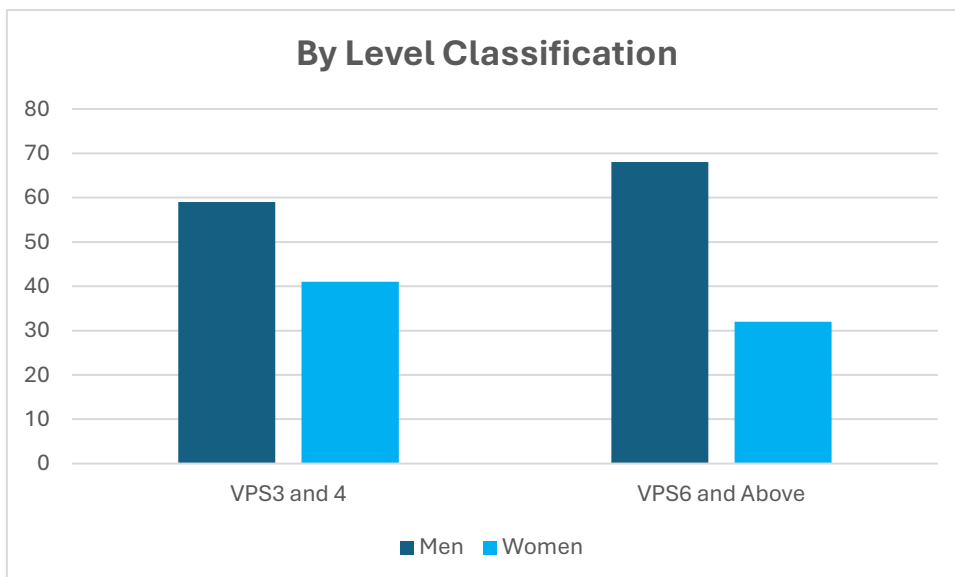
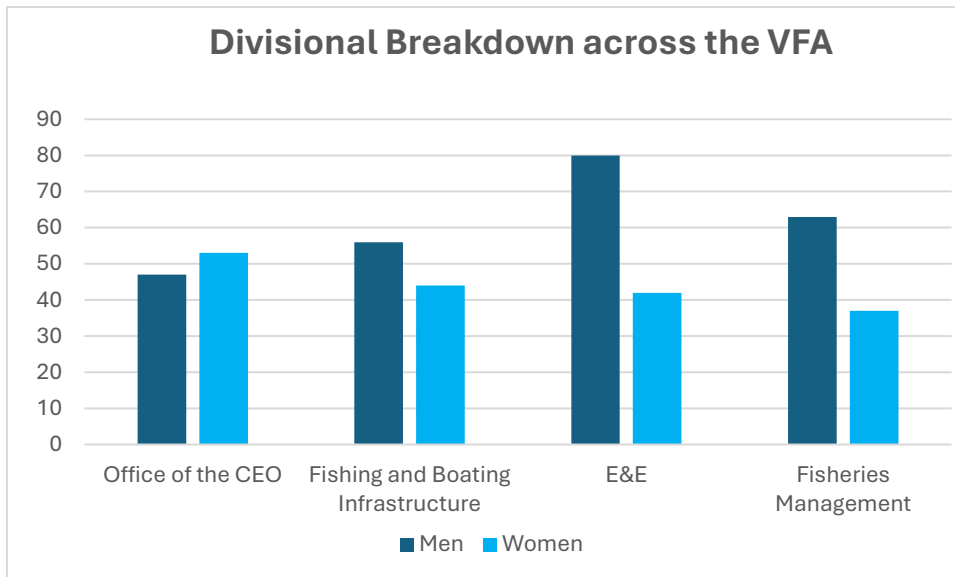
### Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 1

#### Gender composition of all levels of the workforce



**Progress made: YES**

In VFA's 2021 audit, VFA's workforce comprised 64% men and 36% women, including casuals. In the 2023 audit the ratio was 63% men and 37% women. While the percentage of women only rose by 1%, VFA has put into place several initiatives and is confident there will be further changes as these are fully implemented.



Across the VFA's divisions, the ratio of men to women has changed slightly. The Office of the CEO was relatively even with 53% women and Fishing and Boating Infrastructure 44% women. Education and Enforcement had twice as many men employed as women while the number of women in Fisheries Management dropped to 37%.

When considering job level categories, the percentage of women in the VPS6 and above roles remained at 32% and at the VPS4 and 5 levels, the number of men remains double that of women. The bulk of the VFA's workforce is at VPS3 and 4 levels with the percentage of women rising from 35% to 41%.

There remain substantially more men in full-time positions, however, there has been a percentage increase of women, 2.5%. Women continue to make up the bulk of the part-time employees.

The VFA has more employees in the 15-24 age group since the 2021 audit.

While the overall change has only been 1% the VFA believes that the strategies and actions that have been undertaken in the first two years are helping to build a foundation for further progress over the next two years. This indicator is impacted by recruitment and career development and support strategies and actions. For example:

- Revised recruitment policy procedure and supplementary documentation
- Use of special measures
- Training for hiring managers
- Flexible working options

The continued focus on these strategies will lead to greater representation of women.

## Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 2

### Gender composition of governing bodies



**Progress made: YES**

The gender composition of the Board remained unchanged with 50% women 50% men. The ratio of men to women has been maintained since the Board's inception in 2017.

Recruitment for Board vacancies remain the responsibility of the portfolio department on behalf of the Minister. Two vacancies (1 man, 1 woman) at the end of FY21/22 were filled in October 2022 with two new Board Directors (1 man, 1 woman) one of whom is Aboriginal.

## Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 3

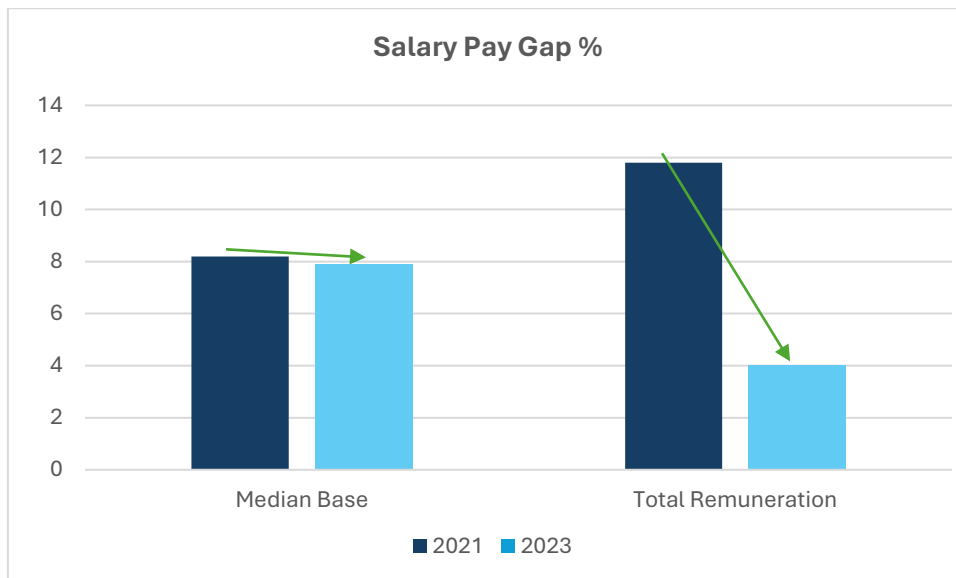
Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender



### Progress made: YES

Overall, the pay gap continues to favour men in both annualised base salary and total remuneration. Total remuneration includes allowances for such things as overtime, higher duties, shift allowance, Duty Officer etc. Men and women have equal access to all allowances.

There has been an improvement in the overall pay gap since 2021. Median base salary pay gap has decreased from 2021 (8.2%) to 2023 (7.9%). There has been an even greater improvement for the median total remuneration pay gap, decreasing from 2021 (11.8%) to 2023 (4.0%).



All pay grades have shown an improvement in terms of the gender pay gap. The most significant improvements have been in those grades which in 2021 had the biggest pay gaps. These were grades which sit further away from the CEO, that is VPS2, 3 and 4. This demonstrates the impact of actions relating to:

- Ensuring higher duties opportunities are aligned with the Recruitment Policy and Procedure



- Managers working with People and Culture on benchmarking salaries to ensure equity
- Hiring Manager and People and Culture discussing remuneration as part of business as usual
- If required, engaging a remuneration panel for exceptions consisting of People and Culture Manager and Director outside of hiring business area.
- Reviewing the Recruitment Policy and Procedure including a process that ensures recruitment and reclassifications receive salaries benchmarked against experience and comparable roles.

## Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 4

### Sexual harassment in the workplace



#### Progress made: YES

The VFA did not receive any formal sexual harassment complaints between 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023. In contrast, the responses to the relevant employee experience questions in the People Matter Survey indicated that respondents experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

There has been a steady decrease in the number of survey respondents indicating they had experienced sexual harassment: 2023 - 5% respondents; 2022 - 7% respondents; and 2021 - 9% respondents. Between the two gender audits the decrease in percentage of respondents indicating that they had experienced sexual harassment in the People Matter Survey was: Women 3% to 2% and Men 11% to 2%.

While any sexual harassment is not tolerated the VFA considers these improvements in terms of percentage decreases are a positive step forward and reflect the strategies and actions implemented in relation to the indicator. These included:

- Education provided on sexual harassment with online training being championed and monitored by Executive team with near 100% completion.
- Sexual harassment elevated from Operational Risk to a Strategic Risk by VFA Board. Risk treatments monitored by the Audit and Risk Board Committee.
- External Whistle blower program sourced and launched June 2022.
- Contact Officers clearly identified on intranet and through email signature blocks.

- Promotion of appropriate workplace behaviour and staff supports delivered via weekly staff newsletter, OHS monthly newsletter and promotion activities in line with Health and Wellbeing Program.
- Standard messaging that aligns with VFA's acceptable behaviour has been applied to external media platforms.
- Statement relating to 'acceptable behaviour' added to new agenda template for use in all internal and external meetings in February 2022.
- Process incorporated into revised Sexual Harassment Procedure for incidents that are handled informally.
- Plan established to improve support for Field Staff: inclusion in annual enforcement training regarding what is not acceptable, available supports, bystander intervention and for CIDT training to incorporate scenarios for dealing with this behaviour.
- Revised Sexual harassment Policy and Procedure approved by the Board August 2022.

The VFA will continue to raise awareness of contact points and resources for those who may have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual harassment. It will also explore why there continues to be no formal complaints compared with employee experience responses in the People Matter Survey.

## Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 5

### Recruitment and promotion in the workplace



**Progress made: YES**

#### Recruitment

In VFA's 2021 data audit women represented 44% of new recruits. In 2023 this figure rose to 59% (15%). This increase was due to several actions taken and processes established, including recruitment and selection documentation updated with the aim to attract a gender diverse candidate pool. The recruitment policy and procedure now include the use of special measures. Examples of the use of special measures during recruitment campaigns which have had an impact on the number of women recruited include: Fisheries Officers (57% women), Senior Investigator and Investigator (66% women) and Technical Officers (Arcadia Fish Hatchery) (50% women).

### **Promotions and higher duties**

Permanent promotion information was not available in the 2021 audit. The 2023 audit data showed that 38% of those who had a permanent promotion were women. This figure is slightly higher than the proportion of women in the VFA (36%). Conversely higher duties undertaken by women has decreased from 36% to 26%.

### **Career Development Opportunities**

There has been a rise in the number of women undertaking career development/training from 17% to 38%. Internal Secondments information was not available in the 2021 audit. The 2023 audit data showed 67% of secondments were taken up by women.

### **Exits**

There was a significant increase in the number of women who have exited, 54% of exits were women in 2023 compared with 20% in 2021.

Overall, the results demonstrate that progress has been made in the way the VFA goes about recruitment with actions relating to: revising recruitment policy procedure and supplementary documentation; using special measures; training for hiring managers; and improved communication regarding secondments

Further work needs to be done to explore why the percentage of women undertaking higher duties has decreased and why a higher proportion of women have left in the last 12 months.

## **Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 6**

**Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements supporting workers with family or caring responsibilities**



**Progress made: YES**

### **Formal Flexible Working Arrangements**

The uptake of formal flexible working arrangements has increased significantly since 2021 with 53% of staff now on a formal arrangement. Of these staff the gender composition is 50% men and 50% women. A major change in flexible arrangements for non-rostered staff is the availability of hybrid working between office and home.

Managers received information on managing flexible work arrangements including hybrid working. Flexible work was encouraged and demonstrated by Executive and senior management. Fisheries Officers work to a roster and flexibility can be built into the roster.

### **Leave supporting family and caring responsibilities**

The composition of staff who took parental leave has changed since 2021. There was a greater uptake by women for parental leave 36% (2023) compared with 25% (2021) but the average number of weeks decreased from 34 weeks (2021) to 22.5 weeks (2023).

Men represented 75% of those who took parental leave in 2021 and decreased to 64% in 2023. Average weeks taken decreased slightly from 6.7 (2021) to 6.3 (2023).

Strategies and actions have been implemented to improve education around access to flexible working arrangements for those seeking it. Initiatives have also included such things as:

- communication and the provision of information regarding the changes to parental leave entitlements
- guidelines to support managers and staff through the process leading up to, during and returning to the workplace from a career break.

There has been a positive shift in responses in the People Matter Survey with employee experience data showing that 81% (increased from 78%) agree their manager supports working flexibly and 63% (increased from 61%) are confident that if they requested a flexible work arrangement it would be given consideration. Also 79% (increased from 78%) agree that the organisation would support them if they needed family violence leave.

## **Workplace Gender Equality Indicator 7**

### **Gendered segregation within the workplace**



**Progress made: YES**

In 2023 across the VFA's work areas, men outnumbered women in all occupation segregation categories as was the case in 2021 other than the Clerical and Administrative Workers category, where it was evenly split.

There has been an increase in women in two categories – Managers (41% to 47%) and Labourers (0% to 20%). Within the Manager category, the split of staff was relatively even in all roles, apart from Specialist Managers, where there were 30% women.

There continues to be significantly more men than women in the Technicians and Trade Workers category, which was expected as the category includes Fisheries Officers. The number of staff in the category of Professionals remains in favour of men (58%) and there has been a shift towards men in the Clerical/Administration category with 53%.

While the overall changes have been minor a number of actions have established a foundation:

- revised recruitment policy procedure and supplementary documentation
- use of special measures
- training for hiring managers
- flexible working options
- training in gender impact assessments
- establishing CaLD community reference group
- development of Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating Strategy

This foundation can be built on with continued focus on strategies and actions.

## Strategies and Measures Progress

Progress made on the strategies and measures outlined in the VFA GEAP 2021 – 2025.

Strategies and Measures	Status	Indicators
<p>1.1 <b>Identify and develop talent within the VFA - Develop a Talent Strategy that supports gender, diversity and inclusion, and considers intersectionality</b></p> <p>Pilot program being trialled in Education and Enforcement division. Outcome of trial will inform workforce strategy and associated Talent Strategy across organisation.</p>	In progress	1, 5
<p>1.1 <b>Identify and develop talent within the VFA - Phases of Talent Strategy implemented</b></p> <p>As above Due to commence in 2024</p>	Not started	1, 5
<p>1.2 <b>Ensure our recruitment attracts and promotes diversity - Update our VFA branding and supporting documentation to ensure it is inclusive through consultation with intersectional groups</b></p> <p>The revised recruitment branding and supporting documentation published on intranet and communicated to all staff on 8 June 2023</p>	Complete	1, 5
<p>1.2 <b>Ensure our recruitment attracts and promotes diversity - In recruitment advertisements and position descriptions, be open and transparent to all in our aspirations to become more diverse</b></p> <p>Statement added to all external recruitment documentation. Published on intranet and implemented on 8 June 2023.</p>	Complete	1, 5
<p>1.3 <b>Improve gender balance at senior management level (SES, Principal Scientists, STS, and VPS6) - Actively recruit for gender balance</b></p> <p>The recruitment policy and procedure now includes the use of special measures.</p>	Ongoing	1, 5
<p>1.4 <b>Promote diversity into VPS5 and above roles - In addition to internal candidate pool, explore opportunities for more lateral and external candidates for roles at VPS5 and above, which includes identifying opportunities for flexible working arrangements (job sharing, part time etc)</b></p> <p>Recruitment policy and supplementary documentation strengthened so that promotion of diversity, flexible arrangements etc are embedded in recruitment practices.</p>	Ongoing	1, 5
<p>1.5 <b>Continue to learn about the barriers to achieving greater gender composition - Gather and analyse information on barriers to achieving gender composition, using tools such as the People Matter Survey, exit interviews when they occur, Gender Working Group feedback</b></p> <p>Process in place to gather information from sources and now undertaken as part of business as usual practices.</p>	Ongoing	1, 5, 7
<p>1.5 <b>Continue to learn about the barriers to achieving greater gender composition - Work with DoT systems to ensure intersectional data is collected in the new HR system</b></p>	Not started	1

The implementation of the new HR system was delayed to May 2023 and as a result of Machinery of Government, VFA has moved from DTP (formerly DoT) to DJSIR with systems transitioning November 2023.

People and Culture working with DJSIR on what intersectional data can be collected in FY23/24.

Strategies and Measures	Status	Indicators
<p>2.1 <b>Continue to support the Minister and Board Chair to achieve greater intersectional diversity - Continue to ensure diversity is a focus for those involved in advertising and recruiting for Board members</b></p> <p>The VFA has confirmed inclusive wording in advertisements for Board positions when recruitment for Board Directors is undertaken by the portfolio department on behalf of the Minister's Office.</p>	Complete	2
<p>3.1 <b>Ensure the updated parental leave progression entitlements in the 2020 EBA and its successor are being applied and communicated to staff - Communicate updates and reminders of parental leave and its associated entitlements to staff on an annual basis</b></p> <p>Communication undertaken through newsletter and intranet. Process put in place to remind staff.</p>	Ongoing	3, 6
<p>3.2 <b>Evaluate overtime amounts in 'COVID-normal' business operations - Analyse and compare overtime amounts when a full year of events has resumed to validate if a gender difference exists</b></p> <p>The implementation of the new HR system was delayed to May 2023. As a result of Machinery of Government, VFA has moved from DTP (formerly DoT) to DJSIR. With the system changes it was decided to undertake this analysis in 2024</p>	Not started	3, 6
<p>3.3 <b>Provide fair and equitable opportunities for all staff to undertake higher duties - Ensure that higher duties opportunities are aligned with the Recruitment Policy and Procedure</b></p> <p>Recruitment policy and procedure revised in 2021 to incorporate directions for higher duties less than six months.</p>	Complete	3, 5
<p>3.4 <b>Ensure that all recruitment and reclassifications have salaries that are benchmarked with experience and comparable roles - Managers continue to work with People &amp; Culture on benchmarking salaries</b></p> <p>Incorporated into Recruitment Policy and Procedure in 2021. This is occurring in all recruitment and has become business as usual</p>	Complete	3, 5

<p>3.4 <b>Ensure that all recruitment and reclassifications have salaries that are benchmarked with experience and comparable roles - Create a remuneration panel (two people) for recruitment of staff into VPS5 and above</b></p>	Complete	3, 5
<p>Process in place Hiring Manager and People and Culture discuss remuneration as part of business as usual. If required, where there is an exception a remuneration panel is engaged consisting of People and Culture Manager and Director outside of hiring business area.</p>		
<p>3.4 <b>Ensure that all recruitment and reclassifications have salaries that are benchmarked with experience and comparable roles - Review Recruitment Policy and Procedure to include a process that ensures recruitment and reclassifications receive salaries benchmarked against experience and comparable roles</b></p>	Complete	3, 5
<p>Recruitment policy and procedure revised in 2021 to incorporate process for People and Culture Manager to benchmark salaries.</p>		
Strategies and Measures	Status Indicators	
<p>4.1 <b>Raise awareness of contact points and resources for those who may have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual harassment - Source an anonymous whistle-blower program for staff</b></p>	Complete	4
<p>External Whistle blower program sourced and launched June 2022.</p>		
<p>4.1 <b>Raise awareness of contact points and resources for those who may have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual harassment - Train additional contact officers to ensure widespread representation across the VFA</b></p>	In progress	4
<p>People and Culture Manager sourcing contact officer training which includes family violence support. A process for selection for additional contact officers is being considered.</p>		
<p>4.1 <b>Raise awareness of contact points and resources for those who may have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual harassment - Analyse People Matter Survey results, address trends and assess the need for further risk treatments</b></p>	Complete	4
<p>Analysis undertaken by COO in line with the VFA's risk management framework. Sexual Harassment elevated from an Operational Risk to a Strategic Risk by VFA Board. Risk treatments monitored by the Audit and Risk Board Committee.</p>		
<p>4.1 <b>Raise awareness of contact points and resources for those who may have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual harassment - Promote current available resources for staff seeking advice or assistance on matters relating to sexual harassment in the workplace</b></p>	Complete	4
<p>Contact Officers clearly identified on intranet and through email signature blocks. Promotion delivered via weekly staff newsletter, OHS monthly newsletter and promotion activities in line with Health and Wellbeing Program.</p>		



4.2 <b>Implement the VFA's sexual harassment risk treatment plan - Embed into communications that we communicate in line with our values, that we are all accountable to ourselves, our team, the VFA and our community to provide a safe and respectful environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment</b> Standard messaging that aligns with VFA's acceptable behaviour has been applied to external media platforms.	Complete	4
4.2 <b>Implement the VFA's sexual harassment risk treatment plan - Add a statement regarding values and acceptable behaviour to a template agenda for all meetings</b> Statement relating to 'acceptable behaviour' added to new agenda template for use in all internal and external meetings in February 2022.	Complete	4
4.2 <b>Implement the VFA's sexual harassment risk treatment plan - For incidents that are handled informally, explore methods to identify patterns, recognise causes and identify if any further treatment is needed</b> Process for Managers incorporated into revised Sexual Harassment Procedure.	Complete	4
4.2 <b>Implement the VFA's sexual harassment risk treatment plan - Develop a plan to prevent and mitigate sexual harassment when dealing with stakeholders and members of the public, utilising anonymous feedback mechanisms for staff, plus other enforcement agency processes as reference</b> Whistleblower service launched in June 2022. Plan established to improve support for Field Staff: inclusion in annual enforcement training re what is not acceptable, available supports, bystander intervention and for CIDT training to incorporate scenarios for dealing with this behaviour.	Complete	4
4.2 <b>Implement the VFA's sexual harassment risk treatment plan - Review the VFA's Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure</b> Revised Sexual harassment Policy and Procedure approved by the Board August 2022.	Complete	4
4.3 <b>Maintain biannual sexual harassment training - Plan, source and implement sexual harassment training for 2023 and 2025</b> Training currently being sourced through portfolio department DJSIR.	In progress	4

Strategies and Measures	Status	Indicators
5.1 <b>Identify job specific development needs targeted at bridging capability gaps for staff newly appointed into roles -Develop a template to support the creation of individual development plans for staff newly appointed into roles to ensure the development of the knowledge and skills needed for the role, where required.</b> Developed template for capability plan for new starters to address knowledge and skill gaps. Uploaded template to staff intranet.	Complete	1, 5
5.2 <b>Eliminate potential unconscious bias in our recruitment processes - Conduct training for hiring managers on processes, unconscious bias, raising awareness and building a diverse workforce</b>	Ongoing	1, 3, 5

	Reviewed recruitment process, tightening process on direct appointments. People and Culture has sourced unconscious bias training which has been released to all hiring managers and is now a requirement for all staff participating on interview panels to complete. This requirement has been incorporated into recruitment process and supplementary documentation 2023.		
5.3	<b>Review recruitment processes to attract greater diversity in candidates - Review language in job descriptions and advertisements in consultation with specialists in diversity and inclusion to ensure they are accessible to all, and implement appropriate wording and guidance</b> Recruitment policy, procedure and supplementary documentation published on the intranet and communicated to all staff in June 2023.	Complete	1, 5
5.3	<b>Review recruitment processes to attract greater diversity in candidates - Apply special measures to recruitment processes for identified roles</b> Recruitment policy, procedure and supplementary documentation published on the intranet and communicated to all staff.	Complete	1, 5
5.4	<b>Ensure that internal secondments or reclassifications are recorded and analysed for gender differences - Explore and analyse options to collect both internal secondment and promotion (reclass) data through the existing HR management system</b> Due for commencement in 2024	Not started	1, 5
5.4	<b>Ensure that internal secondments or reclassifications are recorded and analysed for gender differences - When data is available to collect, ensure it is shared with staff and that actions developed if required</b> Due for commencement in 2024	Not started	1, 5
5.5	<b>Explore options for leadership programs and formal and informal mentoring programs - Following the development of the Talent Strategy, implement a leadership program and formal and informal mentoring opportunities</b> Due for commencement in 2025	Not started	1, 5

Strategies and Measures	Status	Indicators
6.1 <b>Raise awareness on family violence leave policy and processes and contact officers - Promote current available resources for staff seeking advice or assistance on matters relating to family violence leave</b> Ensured information about contact officers is clear and easily accessible Promoted on the intranet and in all staff communication including weekly newsletter, monthly OHS newsletter and Health and Wellbeing Program initiatives. Achieved in conjunction with delivering sexual harassment training to staff.	Complete	1, 6

<p><b>6.2 Provide training to managers in supporting those experiencing family violence - Commission a specialist organisation to facilitate ongoing training programs for managers</b> Due to commence in 2024</p>	Not started	1, 6
<p><b>6.3 Improve education around access to flexible working arrangements for those seeking it - Include flexibility in our recruitment material and discuss as part of recruitment process (position description, interview guide, offer)</b> Revised Recruitment policy procedure and supplementary documentation published on the intranet and communicated to all staff.</p>	Complete	1, 6
<p><b>6.3 Improve education around access to flexible working arrangements for those seeking it - Maintain communications around available flexible working arrangements</b> Information on the intranet and provided to new starters.</p>	Complete	1, 6
<p><b>6.3 Improve education around access to flexible working arrangements for those seeking it - Undertake a gender impact assessment on the uptake of flexible working arrangements</b> Acknowledging the system limitations and changes caused by the Machinery of Government, People and Culture has decided that to obtain greater data this action needs to be moved to 2024.</p>	Not started	1, 6
<p><b>6.3 Improve education around access to flexible working arrangements for those seeking it - Educate leaders to support flexible working arrangements</b> Manager Drop-in sessions held re flexible working arrangements and managing workloads. Ongoing communication needed.</p>	Ongoing	1, 6
<p><b>6.4 Provide opportunities for job-sharing, part-time and flexible working arrangements, where applicable - Undertake an assessment to identify flexible options for roles (link to the Recruitment Policy)</b> People and Culture working with all recruitment managers to encourage exploring flexible work arrangements, that benefit the employee and enable the business operations to be delivered.</p>	In progress	1, 6
<p><b>6.5 Gain insight into initiatives and programs for supporting the individual needs of staff returning to the workplace after a career break - Develop a template to support managers and staff through the process leading up to, during and returning to the workplace from a career break</b> With consideration of what might meet the needs of both employee and Manager, People and Culture decided to create guidelines - one for parental leave and one for a career break. Guidelines to be finalised post 30 June 2023</p>	In progress	1, 6
<p><b>6.6 Manager and staff member understand individual workload challenges and pressures - As part of the PDR process, individual workload challenges and pressures are discussed at the commencement, midcycle and end-of-PDR cycle</b> Communication on commencement and mid-cycle. Tools available for Managers on how to conduct discussions regarding workload</p>	Ongoing	6

challenges and pressures. Reminders provided leading into end of PDR cycle in June.

Strategies and Measures	Status	Indicators
<p>7.1 <b>Embed gender impact assessment in decision making - Identify programs, policies and services that have direct and significant public impact</b></p> <p>Training delivered in Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) for Executives and Senior managers December 2022. However, Executive and senior management still developing the knowledge and skills to identify policies, programs and services requiring a GIA. A GIA decision making tool to be considered to assist Management.</p>	Ongoing	1, 7
<p>7.1 <b>Embed gender impact assessment in decision making - Implement training in conducting gender impact assessments for managers developing or reviewing policies, programs or services that directly and significantly impact on the public</b></p> <p>Inaugural training course conducted in December 2022.</p>	Ongoing	1, 7
<p>7.1 <b>Embed gender impact assessment in decision making - Implement training for all staff so that any decision-making process i) considers how the policy/program/service can better meet the needs of different genders, ii) addresses gender inequality that may be shaped by other aspects of identity, and iii) promotes gender equality</b></p> <p>Inaugural training course conducted in December 2022. Some GIAs undertaken following the training. Further work to be done to embed into decision making including further training and communication, and sourcing a decision making tool as to when to conduct a GIA during 2024 and 2025</p>	In progress	1, 7
<p>7.2 <b>Generate collaboration during the implementation of the GEAP - Establish a cross-functional cross-level diverse working group to operate as key influencers and advocates</b></p> <p>The GEAP Project Team identified that it was too early in the GEAP implementation to establish the group. Inaugural GIA training completed with training to be undertaken by more staff in 2024. Forming the group will be a focus of 2024</p>	Not started	1, 7
<p>7.3 <b>Attract diverse groups to work in the VFA - Undertake targeted Fisheries Officer recruitment drives to improve our diversity</b></p> <p>Targeted recruitment undertaken 2022.</p>	Ongoing	1, 5, 7
<p>7.3 <b>Attract diverse groups to work in the VFA - Implement the GoTafe Arcadia hatchery employment strategy to achieve 50% Indigenous employment at the hatchery</b></p> <p>Strategy implemented</p>	Ongoing	1, 5, 7

<p><b>7.4 Launch a new Women in Recreational Fishing (WIRF) Strategy by March 2022 - Use surveys from the WIRF community and the Victorian public to inform our knowledge of the external perception of the VFA brand</b></p> <p>Data gathered to inform strategy</p>	Complete	1, 7
<p><b>7.4 Launch a new Women in Recreational Fishing (WIRF) Strategy by March 2022 - Develop the WIRF Strategy using workshop consultation and survey data</b></p> <p>Strategy now incorporates boating and is named Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating (WIRFaB) It will be finalised post June 2023.</p>	In progress	1, 5, 7
<p><b>7.5 Improve engagement with diverse communities -Establish a Community Reference Group as a platform for assisting Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities to engage with the VFA and contribute to fisheries resource management discussions</b></p> <p>CaLD Community Reference Group has been established.</p>	Complete	1, 5, 7
<p><b>7.5 Improve engagement with diverse communities - Continue to implement initiatives from the VFA Accessibility Action Plan to engage with people of all abilities</b></p> <p>Reporting of the implementation of Accessibility Action Plan delivered to VFA Executive Team and People and Safety Board Committee.</p>	Ongoing	1, 5, 7
<p><b>7.6 Utilise whole-of-government surveys to improve our knowledge, understanding and awareness of gendered segregation in the workplace -Encourage staff participation in the annual People Matter Survey</b></p> <p>Regular communication before launch of each survey using VPSC tools.</p>	Ongoing	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
<p><b>7.6 Utilise whole-of-government surveys to improve our knowledge, understanding and awareness of gendered segregation in the workplace - Encourage staff participation in government surveys such as Whole-of-Victorian Government pulse surveys and the Australian Workplace Equality Index Employee Survey</b></p> <p>Process put in place to utilise and promote government surveys.</p>	Ongoing	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
<p><b>7.6 Utilise whole-of-government surveys to improve our knowledge, understanding and awareness of gendered segregation in the workplace - Communicate results of all surveys involving the VFA to staff</b></p> <p>All results are made available to staff as soon as practical. Communication through all staff emails and results available on the intranet.</p>	Ongoing	1, 4, 5, 6, 7

## Gender Impact Assessments

The VFA completed seven Gender Impact Assessments for the reporting period. Below is a summary of actions taken following the assessments.

**A review of the VFA's Recruitment Policy and Procedure and supplementary recruitment documentation.**

**Subject:** Policy | **Status:** For Review | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>The VFA's Recruitment Policy and Procedure and supplementary documentation covers all aspects of the recruitment process for vacancies and new roles which may be advertised internally and/or externally to the VFA.</p>	<p>Actions centred on changes to policy, process, documentation and education.</p> <p>Flexibility needs and diversity of applicants considered during the recruitment process.</p> <p>Use of Special Measures to achieve diversity.</p> <p>Understanding of unconscious bias and its impact on decision making - mandatory training for those involved in recruitment panels. Training made available to all staff.</p> <p>Documentation style and presentation significantly changed to be more inclusive.</p> <p>Clear employee benefits in Position Description.</p> <p>Guidance provided to hiring managers on how to make key accountabilities and key selection criteria inclusive in Position Description.</p> <p>Flexible ways of working at VFA information provided at interview.</p> <p>Selection Assessment Report ensures Hiring Manager has spoken to the preferred candidate on flexibility and workplace adjustments required for role.</p> <p>Hiring panel required to complete training in unconscious bias.</p>

## Arcadia Visitor Centre

**Subject:** Service | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>The visitor centre aims to connect VFA to the community and provide an opportunity for the public to see VFA's Arcadia hatchery in a safe way, learn what VFA does and increase public access to fishing.</p>	<p>Visitor Centre design has considered and where possible included accessible ramps and easy to access parking spaces. Information and educational signage throughout the facility has considered a wide range of age groups and reading abilities which may use centre. Design has considered and made provision for adequate security such as electronic gates and fencing. The design was completed and signed off in FY22/23 and construction has started and is in its early stages at 30 June 2023.</p>

## Toilet block at Arcadia Visitor Centre

**Subject:** Service | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>The VFA is constructing toilet and shower facilities at the Arcadia Visitor Centre. The project aims to: - construct facilities available and accessible to all; - provide free amenities to people who are visiting the Visitor Centre or camping in the vicinity; - build a low maintenance facility and not reliant on staffing; and - provide facilities for individuals and families who may not camp without suitable facilities present.</p>	<p>Visitors Centre design has considered and included provision for all abilities, unisex toilets and showers. The design was completed and signed off in FY22/23 and construction was started but in the early stages at 30 June 2023.</p>

## Playground at Arcadia Visitor Centre

**Subject:** Service | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>Purpose of visitor centre is to provide a facility for a family day out and a play space to help facilitate that.</p> <p>Accessible play space for all children, parents and carers to feel comfortable, safe and welcome.</p>	<p>Visitors Centre playground has been designed for families (children and adults) and caters for diversity. Playground design includes slides, climbing nets, bridges and play equipment for children and families to explore. The design provides for barbeque and picnic facilities located around the perimeter along with a viewing platform in the centre of the playground where adults and other family members can sit and watch those using the playground.</p> <p>The design was completed and signed off in FY22/23 and construction was started but in the early stages at 30 June 2023. Post reporting period an independent playground auditor to be engaged to ensure constructed playground meets relevant safety and design standards once completed.</p>

## Marketing Strategy for Arcadia Visitor Centre

**Subject:** Policy | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** No action taken

Description	Actions Taken
<p>A marketing strategy is to be developed that attracts a diverse group of people to engage in the Visitor's Centre and considers how people of different genders, communities and abilities may use or access the facility.</p>	<p>Public opening is scheduled for early 2024 before which the VFA intend to embark on a marketing and promotional campaign. The marketing strategy will be targeted at a diverse group (including women, CALD communities, and all abilities) using a variety of methods that utilise communication through schools, local community groups, Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating (WIRFaB) connections as well as fishing clubs and social media fishing interest groups. .</p>



**Budget Bid 'More boat ramps, jetties, car parks'****Subject:** Program | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>The 'More Boat ramps jetties and car parks' program includes multiple projects to upgrade local boating facilities and develop a new boating facility at Tarago Reservoir.</p>	<p>The design and planning for Cowes and Avalon were completed prior to 30 June 2023 which included the provision of additional ambient lighting at these locations and Boating Vic cameras to improve safety for all genders particularly for women. The installation of the lights and cameras was completed post 1 July 2023.</p>
<p>These projects will enhance boating experiences by improving the condition of infrastructure and increasing recreational opportunities for Victorians and visitors.</p>	<p>The design stage for the following projects commenced in FY22/23 - St Leonards, Lang Lang, Mildura, Tankerton, Torquay, Laanecoorie, Inverloch, Werribee South, Howqua Inlet, Lake Boga, Limeburner's, Mornington and Tooradin. Tarago site selection to be determined and the gender impact assessment will be applied to designs.</p>
<p>This initiative also contributes to the delivery of the government's election commitment, Go Fishing Victoria 'More piers, jetties and opportunities for little anglers'.</p>	<p>As detailed designs for these projects are progressed, there will be consideration of safety improvements for all genders including lighting, landscaping and the proximity from the ramp to carparks and will include delineated pathways and safety crossings. Universal design principles are also considered with all upgrades including the provision of all abilities access, pram designs and mobility aids. Throughout the design consultation process the Better Boating Victoria team has and will continue to reach out to female boaters, including the Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating leadership group.</p>

## Budget Bid 'Go Fishing Victoria'

**Subject:** Program | **Status:** New | **Action Taken:** Yes

Description	Actions Taken
<p>The 'Go Fishing Victoria' program aims to increase production of Victoria's fish stocks by expanding Arcadia and Snobs Creek fish hatcheries and maintaining the stocking of fish at 10 million a year through fish purchases.</p> <p>A series of programs will also be delivered to promote and support recreational fishing in Victoria and grow the aquaculture sector, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. delivering Little Anglers kits to increase primary school-aged participation in fishing</li> <li>2. grants to support local angling clubs to upgrade local boating and fishing facilities</li> <li>3. contributing to new facilities at Corinella Boating and Angling Club</li> <li>4. funding to support the state's aquaculture sector</li> <li>5. supporting Victoria's first indigenous-run oyster farm in Lakes Entrance.</li> </ol> <p>The program will also provide habitat improvements to preserve and maintain fisheries, as well as fund Fishcare Victoria to promote sustainable fishing practices.</p>	<p><b>Action for 1</b></p> <p>In the tender documentation for the 95,000 Little Angler kits it was requested – 'Where possible, the fishing rod should be attractive to the young fisher featuring bright colours, stickers, mascot type characters and/or inspiring labelling. The rods should be gender neutral. The VFA will require the Victorian State Government logo to be placed on the fishing rod between the butt section and the first guide'. Rods have met specified requirements. Distribution has commenced.</p> <p><b>Action for 2 and 3</b></p> <p>Grants to angling clubs - the guidelines for grants to angling have been designed to encourage participation of existing and new members in recreational fishing but also to attend club meetings/functions. A key outcome of this program is to make club rooms and meeting opportunities more attractive to different genders.</p> <p><b>Action for 4</b></p> <p>Years one and two of this four-year election commitment is funding two additional staff in the Aquaculture team to complete the work involved in growing Victoria's Aquaculture Sector. Recruitment considered gender balance. One man and one woman recruited.</p> <p><b>Action for 5.</b></p> <p>This election commitment is a grant provided to GLAWAC to deliver under their direction, supporting Victoria's first indigenous-run oyster farm in Lakes Entrance.</p>

