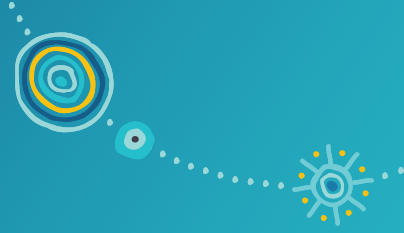




Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities



.....

Stronger Together:

WA's Plan for Gender Equality

Second Action Plan 2021–2025:

Progress Report 2022



Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

We particularly acknowledge the caring strengths, resilience and central role of Aboriginal women within their families.

Language

Within Western Australia, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander may be referred to in the national context.





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Minister's foreword



The WA Government has committed to a program of change within government, business and community over many years to prioritise gender equality in Western Australia. Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality is the backbone of that commitment.

Stronger Together sets the direction for structural and cultural changes that are necessary within government, business and the community to advance gender equality, in line with the vision that:

Women and girls in Western Australia live and work safely in a community where diversity is embraced and where access to rights, resources, opportunities and protections is not determined by gender.

This Progress Report highlights the achievements of the State Government in 2022, including the updates on the 55 actions to advance gender equality and the development of 25 new actions, over and above those articulated in the Second Action Plan 2021–2025.

While important progress has been made, we know there is more work to be done. Women continue to experience high levels of domestic and sexual violence. Our gender pay gap is the highest in the country, impacting women's long term economic security and ability to retire independently. Women face significant barriers to enter, often highly-paid, male-dominated industries and are still being overlooked for leadership roles.

As the Minister for Women's Interests, I am a champion for this cause and will ensure gender equality is prioritised in policy and decision making. However, change cannot be delivered by government alone. We need a concerted effort across all areas of our community, to ensure women and girls can reach their full potential. With a significant focus on these issues on a national and international scale, now is the time to embrace change.

Sue Ellery MLC

Minister for Women's Interests

Introduction

Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality (Stronger Together) was launched in March 2020. It is the Western Australian (WA) Government's 10-year framework for coordinating effort and resources across government, business and community sectors to build a better, fairer and more equitable community. Stronger Together uses a whole of government approach to drive gender equality and ensure women's full social and economic participation.

Stronger Together is underpinned by four action plans. We are currently implementing the Second Action Plan 2021–2025 (the Second Action Plan), which outlines work being undertaken by the Government to advance gender equality across four years.

The Second Action Plan includes five focus areas: COVID-19 Women's Recovery, Safety and Respect at Work, Primary Prevention, Aboriginal Women's Leadership and Older Women. As a living strategy, work is iterative and continues to adapt to new and emerging issues.

This progress report provides updates on the gender equality programs and actions in the Second Action Plan that have been progressed by WA Government agencies during 2022.

Stronger Together Priority Areas



Health and wellbeing

Women are healthy, active and lead fulfilled lives



Safety and justice

Women live safely and have appropriate access to adequate legal protections



Economic independence

Women can be financially independent across all life stages



Leadership

Women's skills, achievements and strengths are valued, enabling them to participate equally in the community, including at leadership levels

Women's Report Card

In 2022, the Department of Communities (Communities) in partnership with the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre released the seventh [Women's Report Card](#).

The Women's Report Card presents fact-based information to raise awareness of the status of women in Western Australia and contributes to the evidence base which underpins actions to address the barriers to women's progress and promote the benefits of greater gender equity.







Considerable progress has been made towards gender equality in the last few decades. However, data from the Women's Report Card demonstrates that there is still much to do in WA:


- to reduce and remove barriers to women fully participating and progressing at all levels of the workforce. Women on average have lower lifetime earnings than men, leading to an increased risk of reaching retirement without financial independence.
- to reduce the highest gender pay gap in Australia, largely attributable to a combination of gender discrimination and the occupational segregation in high paying industries such as mining and construction.
- to improve choice for women to enter male-dominated industries, including addressing high rates of sexual harassment. Reports have highlighted the pervasive nature of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the mining and resource industry in WA.
- to eliminate family and domestic violence in WA.


Data snapshot


WA women at a glance



50%
of Western Australians are women and girls
ABS, 2022

Life expectancy  **86 years**
Aboriginal women  **72 years**
Men  **81 years**
ABS, 2022


1,337,171 million
women's and girl's population in 2021
ABS, 2022


Women's representation on State Government boards and committees is **52.5%**
– the highest on record in Western Australia to date
Dept of the Premier and Cabinet, 2022


Teenage women giving birth in WA fell **26.6%** since 2016
Dept of Health, 2020


The number of women assisted by specialist homelessness services has increased by **23%** in the last 10 years
AIHW, 2022


The proportion of women in public sector leadership in WA has increased across all four tiers of management
PSC, 2020-21


The proportion of employed women working full-time in WA is **52.5%** in comparison to 82.6% for employed men in WA
ABS, Labour Force, Australia. Detailed, 2022


Women's representation in CEO positions across Australian companies and the community sector has increased
BCEC, 2022


WA's gender pay gap is **21.2%** across all industries, down from 28.2% in 2011, but higher than that reported nationally
ABS, 2022

This data and a summary of other data relating to women in WA is available in the [2022 Women's Report Card](#)

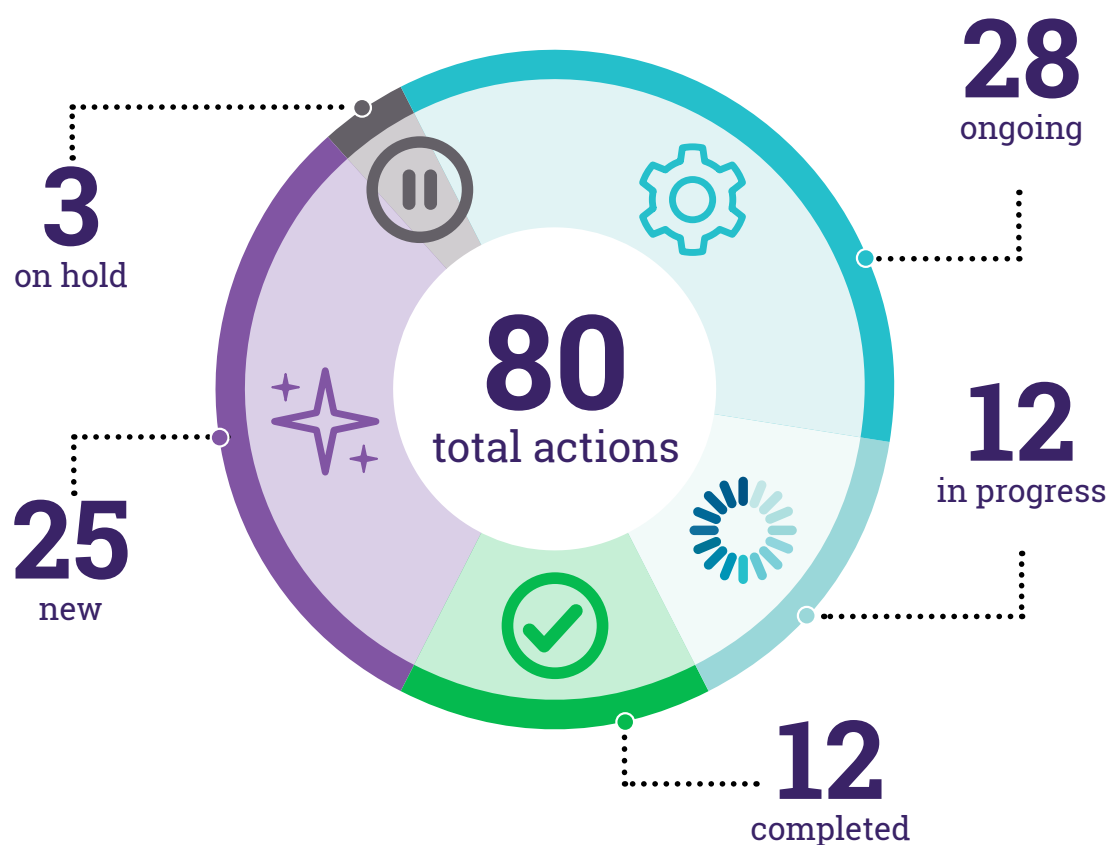
Progress on Stronger Together Actions for Gender Equality

The Second Action Plan includes 55 actions being undertaken across WA Government agencies to support women and drive gender equality within workplaces, homes, education and training institutions, the justice system and health system.

A further 17 initiatives are being delivered to support staff and drive cultural change within the public sector.

Significant progress has been made on these actions during 2022. In addition to the actions listed in the Second Action Plan, the State Government has commenced 25 new actions to drive gender equality.

WA Government actions in 2022



Further details are available in the appendix.

Key achievements in 2022

Women on government boards and committees



Representation of women in leadership has been a focus of the WA Government, with a target set at 50 per cent women on government boards and committees.

Women now hold 52.3 per cent of positions on government boards and committees.

Women in the judiciary




While women outnumber men in the legal profession in every state and territory of Australia, they have been traditionally underrepresented in the judiciary.

In March 2017, women made up 38 per cent of roles across the Supreme Court of Western Australia, Family Court of Western Australia, State Administrative Tribunal, District Court of Western Australia, Magistrates Court of Western Australia, Children’s Court of Western Australia, and Coroner’s Court of Western Australia, compared with 62 percent of men.

The WA Government introduced the justice pipeline model to facilitate planning for how to increase the number of judicial officers on a supply–demand model. As a result, the number of judicial officers has risen from 135 to 167.

After new appointments in November 2022, the proportion of women in judicial roles in Western Australia reached 51.5 per cent, against 48.5 per cent for men. This equates to 86 women and 81 men amongst the 167 jurists. This is the first time in Western Australia’s history that women have outnumbered men on the bench.



Priority Areas  Health and wellbeing  Safety and justice  Economic independence  Leadership

Status  Ongoing  In progress  Completed  New  On hold

Gender Equality in Procurement – WA Public Sector Pilot



Procurement is playing an increasingly important role for governments as a lever for creating change, including enhancing economic opportunities for women. The public sector has significant purchasing power which can be used to support better outcomes for women. The WA Government entered into contracts with a combined value of more than \$8 billion in 2020–21.

In July 2022, Communities, with support from, the Department of Finance, launched a 12-month Gender Equality in Procurement – WA Public Sector Pilot (the Pilot), the first step to embed gender equality principles and practices into selected government procurement activities. WA is the second Australian jurisdiction to implement a gender equality in procurement initiative after Victoria.

The Pilot uses the purchasing power of the WA Government to improve gender equality by supporting suppliers of goods and services to implement gender equality policies and practices.

Introducing procurement measures to encourage gender diversity within businesses and workplaces is a step towards increasing the visibility of women at all levels in the workforce, including participation in occupations that have traditionally been male-dominated such as construction.



Directors General and representatives of agencies participating in the Gender Equality in Procurement Pilot.

There are 15 State Government agencies participating in the Pilot:

- Department of Communities
- Department of Finance
- Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
- Department of Justice
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- VenuesWest
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
- WA Police
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Public Transport Authority
- Main Roads

As at December 2022, 26 contracts had been awarded under the Pilot with a total value of \$35,899,301. In addition to those contracts, approximately 80 tenders that include the gender equality clause are still active in Tenders WA. An evaluation of the Pilot will be undertaken early in 2023 to inform the next steps in this pioneering initiative.

While only in its initial stages, the Pilot is already generating significant interest. Other states and territories have expressed a strong interest in WA's Pilot and are looking to follow our lead. In addition, work is underway to expand the Pilot to include a number of new agencies in 2023.

Priority Areas  **Health and wellbeing**  **Safety and justice**  **Economic independence**  **Leadership**

Status  **Ongoing**  **In progress**  **Completed**  **New**  **On hold**

Workplace Gender Equality Agency Pilot Program



Under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*, all Australian organisations with more than 100 employees are required to report to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) on workforce gender equality data. Public sector agencies are not currently required to report.

Communities participated in the 2020–21 WGEA Voluntary Reporting Pilot Program as a proof of concept, to test the application of reporting methods on public sector agencies and ascertain how public sector data and information can be provided to WGEA.

Since Communities participation in the 2020–21 reporting for the WGEA pilot, Australian States and Territories made an in-principle agreement to National Cabinet to provide public sector workforce data to WGEA in response to the Respect@Work report.

The lessons learned from Communities participation in the pilot have informed the Public Sector Commission’s consideration of reporting to WGEA in 2022-23. In 2023, agencies will work with WGEA on data definitions, alignment and consistency to further support expanded public sector WGEA reporting into the future.

Women: Action Plan to Improve WA Public Sector Employment Outcomes 2020–2025



The WA Government’s Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy 2020–2025 includes an aspirational target of 50 per cent women in Senior Executive Service (SES) roles across the public sector. In September 2022, women held 47.7 per cent of SES roles, an increase from 32.9 per cent in 2016.

Released in September 2022, the Public Sector [Commissioner’s Instruction 39](#), about filling public sector vacancies, includes specific measures to support public sector agencies to increase workforce diversity. A range of other resources have been released, including guidance for best practice in recruitment, and managing unconscious bias to support diverse recruitment outcomes.

In October and November 2022, the Public Sector Commissioner hosted two discussions about women in public sector leadership, the first with women CEOs and senior executives and the second with men CEOs and senior executives. There was a focus on addressing barriers to women in the workplace, what senior leaders can do individually and collectively, and identifying solutions.

Priority Areas



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice



Economic independence



Leadership

Status



Ongoing



In progress



Completed



New



On hold

Case Study

MentorNet program



The 2021 local government elections saw

the number of women council members increase by 40 per cent. The WA Government wants to ensure this positive trend continues.

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries provides funding to the Australian Local Government Women's Association WA branch (ALGWA) to deliver the MentorNet program to support and build the capabilities of women council members.

Following its launch in July 2022, 14 mentor and mentee arrangements are currently in place across the State, from local governments in both regional and metropolitan locations. Participants in

MentorNet develop internal and external networks to better inform their role on council.

The program is open to all female council members across WA and is also delivered online for access and inclusion of regional and remote Councillors.



Director General of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Lanie Chopping at the MentorNet launch.

Case Study

Women in Fire Management



The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCAs) is committed to increasing gender diversity in its workforce, particularly in the fire management business where the number of women involved has historically been low.

A Women in Fire Management Action Plan (the Action Plan) was developed by DBCA in 2019, with the goal of increasing the number of women in fire and leadership roles. Wide consultation was undertaken to understand the issues, perceptions, biases and barriers that contribute to the significant gender imbalance. Nearly three quarters of the women in operational roles who were surveyed felt they had faced barriers in taking on fire leadership roles.

The Action Plan included clear targets for the department to deliver change, while still committing to merit-based principles. The targets set for 2024 are:

- 30 per cent women in Public Service Award fire positions
- 20 per cent women in Australian Workers Union positions
- 10 per cent women in fire leadership positions in districts or regions

To work towards meeting those targets, the Action Plan included 23 actions in the areas of building an inclusive workforce, flexible work arrangements, building confidence, staying connected, continual improvement and recruitment.

A dedicated Women in Fire project officer was appointed to support implementation of the Action Plan. Regional visits were held to raise awareness of the program and discuss concerns and successful initiatives with managers. Tailored training against sexual harassment, bullying and harassment was rolled out and continues to be delivered across regions. A presentation on the Women in Fire Management initiative was delivered to 280 people, including national and interstate representatives at the Karla Katitjin Fire Knowledge forum in August 2022.

The latest data on the Women in Fire Management initiative demonstrates the success of these actions with targets all being met ahead of schedule and other data showing significant improvement.

Priority Areas



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice



Economic independence



Leadership

Status



Ongoing



In progress



Completed



New



On hold

| Positions held by women | 2019 | 2022 |
|---|------|------|
| Fire management positions | 17% | 33% |
| Front line fire fighter positions | 5% | 12% |
| Fire duty officer roles | 4% | 14% |
| Permanent fire management positions in districts or regions | 0% | 19% |
| Women in permanent AWU overseer positions | 0% | 1% |



DBCA Conservation employee working at a prescribed burn in the Perth Hills District.

New in 2022

In 2022, we commenced 25 new initiatives across government to advance gender equality and achieve the outcomes of Stronger Together. This includes important work to create safer workplaces, commence the development of WA's first Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy and key legislative reforms.

Safe workplaces



The State Government is strongly committed to providing safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces for all workers across WA, regardless of industry or size.

Addressing and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace ensures women's safety and their future economic security. Supporting women to fully participate in the workplace is better for the community and the economy.

The [Implementing Respect@Work: WA State Government Progress Report 2022](#) outlines work being undertaken to implement the 18 recommendations that apply to WA in the [Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces](#).

The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee report, [Enough is Enough – Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry](#), highlighted the pervasive nature of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the mining industry in WA. Responsibility for implementation of the 24 recommendations is shared across government and the mining industry. The WA Government released its [Response](#) and [Progress Report](#) in which it supports in full, or in principle, all 15 recommendations within its responsibility to implement. The government continues to work with industry to implement the intent of the remaining nine recommendations directed at industry.

A key component of the State Government response is improvements introduced through the Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety (MARS) Program. This includes funding critical support for victim-survivors and developing resources to support individuals and employers to prevent and respond to workplace violence.

Circle Green Community Legal has been funded to provide legal triage and non-legal social services to those working in WA's mining sector who have been affected by workplace sexual harassment. Circle Green is a trusted service in the WA community, which allows for anonymous, culturally sensitive reporting, and offers health and wellbeing referrals to those in need of additional support.

Priority Areas Health and wellbeing Safety and justice Economic independence Leadership

Status Ongoing In progress Completed New On hold

Funding has also been provided to the Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) to develop accessible and sustainable specialist training in responding to sexual assaults on mine sites for health responders.

To build a culture of safety and respect in the mining industry, Department of Communities is leading the development of the Respect in Mining (RIM) Program, to educate workers about the gendered drivers of violence, implement a whole-of-organisation approach to violence prevention, and work to embed respectful relationships across organisations.

In 2022, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (the WHS Act) was updated to include psychosocial risks, such as sexual harassment and bullying. The new regulations specifically require a person conducting a business or undertaking to eliminate psychosocial risks, or minimise them, so far as is reasonably practicable. This new duty places psychosocial hazards on the same footing as other significant safety hazards and will ensure workplaces act consciously to address the risk of harm to all their workers.

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy



The State Government has undertaken significant work over the past year to improve women's safety and justice outcomes.

The Office of the Commissioner for Victims of Crime and Communities are jointly developing WA's first Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy. The Strategy will adopt a whole of government approach to addressing sexual violence in WA, covering prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing.

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken during 2022, to inform consultations which will include the voices of people with lived experience of sexual violence, members of the community and people working in the sector.

Drink spiking test kit rollout



As announced in October 2022, drink spiking victims now have access to drug testing kits across Western Australia at all 24-hour police stations in Perth and all regional stations. The tests are able to screen for more than 600 drugs that weren't previously picked up by toxicology tests.

This world first initiative will not only help to swiftly identify potential crimes and bring offenders to justice, but also paint a clearer picture of the prevalence of drink spiking in WA.

In addition, the State Government recently introduced new laws to ban violent offenders and perpetrators of antisocial behaviour from protected entertainment precincts. Mandatory exclusion from these areas will apply to anyone convicted of various violent and sexual offences and this includes drink spiking offences.

Period products in high schools



Period products are a fundamental health necessity, but the cost and the stigma associated with them means many students do not have access to the items they need while at school.

Announced in August 2022, the State Government will provide free period products for all public high school students from term one 2023. Evidence shows improving access to tampons and pads keeps students engaged in education, improves public health outcomes, and helps them reach their full potential.

Legislative reforms



The Department of Justice is drafting a new Equal Opportunity Act, following review of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*. The Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's Final Report on its review was tabled in Parliament in August 2022 including 163 recommendations.

The new Act will ensure the State has modern, fair and effective anti-discrimination laws that make it easier for the community - including individuals, employers and service providers - to read and understand their rights and obligations.

The State Government also announced a review of its abortion legislation and its commitment to protecting the reproductive rights of women in WA. In 1998, WA was the first state in Australia to decriminalise abortion and for the last two decades, these laws have provided a robust framework for the safe provision of abortion services. However, these laws have not kept pace with changes to medical care and modern abortion legislation. There is now a need to reform the legislation for abortions to remove clinically unnecessary barriers to care and align with laws in other states and territories.

In late 2022, the Department of Health conducted a four week consultation period to seek input on the modernisation of WA abortion laws. Work will commence in 2023 to consider the results of the consultation and prioritise legislative reforms.

The *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Amendment (Offensive Advertising) Bill 2022* was introduced into State Parliament in August to provide the Department of Transport the power to cancel or refuse vehicle licence applications for vehicles that promote advertising that is deemed offensive by Ad Standards. Under the changes, Western Australians who believe advertising on a vehicle to be degrading, obscene or insensitive can now lodge a complaint with Ad Standards and they will assess the advertisement against the Australian Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics.

Pathways for women into Vocational Education and Training and STEM



In 2022, a number of new programs were established at TAFEs including Gender Diversity in the Trades, Transition to Further Education or Employment, which specifically targets women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds, and the Start Up Program which offers skills in starting a small business and includes access to creche facilities. These new programs commence during 2023.

Try a Trade program for women was delivered across campuses in the Wheatbelt Region and a STEM program for girls in Year 9 provided skills and knowledge about careers in the Health Care industry. A new program will provide women with training for the Certificate IV in Information Technology (Cyber Security) starting in 2023.

Several TAFE locations delivered the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) program, which is for women of all ages but is particularly helpful for older women. The course provides women with the information and skills needed to explore future options regarding entering or re-entering the workforce, vocational training and further education with the aim to increase their confidence and self-esteem. The course also supports women from CaLD communities to improve their English and aligns with the focus area of older women identified in the Second Action Plan.

State innovation hubs are being funded to specifically increase the participation of women in hub programs and projects. The hubs were funded through the New Industries Fund to deliver cyber security, data science, life sciences and creative technologies.

Women's Grants for a Stronger Future



In 2022, Communities relaunched the Women's Grants program as Women's Grants for a Stronger Future alongside a significant increase in available funding to \$335,000 providing more opportunities to support initiatives that advance gender equality to build a better, fairer and more equitable WA community.

Organisations were asked to submit projects or programs that address one or more of Stronger Together priority areas. Grants were available in the following allocations:

- Up to \$10,000 for one-off activities or initiatives
- \$10,000–\$25,000 for collaborative projects attracting joint project funding, that will contribute to creating sustainable or systemic change in the women's grants program priority areas.
- Up to \$50,000 for innovative pilot programs with a duration of up to two years that contribute to the women's grants program priority areas.
- \$25,000–\$100,000 for programs that support the implementation of the recommendations of the Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces

The successful grant recipients will be announced in March 2023.

Case Study

Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre – Culture Camp



In 2022, Communities provided a grant of \$300,000 to the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) to help develop female Aboriginal leaders of the future. The grant supports the implementation of key priorities of the Kimberley Aboriginal Women’s Strategic Plan (KAWSP) for language, law and culture.

The 2022 KALACC Women’s Culture Camp was held in September 2022 at Gumbanan

in the West Kimberley region and provided a platform for Aboriginal women from the five cultural blocs of the Kimberley to come together to share information, strengthen support networks, support cultural exchange and celebrate women’s voices on Country.

The camp was attended by approximately 400 women and children over three days. As part of the camp, women participated in further strategic planning to develop action plans to underpin the KAWSP.



Image © Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre

Priority Areas Health and wellbeing Safety and justice Economic independence Leadership

Status Ongoing In progress Completed New On hold

Case Study

Centenary of women in rail



In December 2022, the Public Transport Authority (PTA)

celebrated the centenary of women working on Western Australian Government Railways. The lifting of the men-only policy in 1922 allowed the first six women to take up roles in an otherwise all-male environment.

This group paved the way for many more women and the PTA now employs 633 women, almost 30 per cent of the workforce, which is an increase of 50 per cent since 2017. Many of these women have been with PTA for more than 10 years.

Nonetheless, the PTA is still addressing the perception that the rail industry is traditional, and male dominated, which can discourage candidates from applying for our jobs.

The PTA launched its Diversity and Inclusion (D and I) Framework in 2021 to establish targets and strategies to increase the representation of diversity groups, including women, and promote an inclusive workplace. The Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) was introduced in 2022 to support implementation of the D and I Framework and drive sustainable change through a more respectful and inclusive workforce and workplace, free from sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination. The RWP holds leaders accountable for role modelling and reinforcing the standard of behaviour required.



The first six women employed in the rail industry in Western Australia formed a lasting bond that extended to other women who joined after them.

The Rail Systems Development Program includes an equal opportunity employer clause and is actively promoting its apprenticeships to women by highlighting women as role models in a range of operations roles.

Thanks to those six pioneers, women can now enjoy varied careers within PTA. While much has changed since 1922, PTA is conscious of the benefits of a diverse workforce and undertakes continuous improvement strategies to ensure that women are recruited, developed and retained in its workforce.

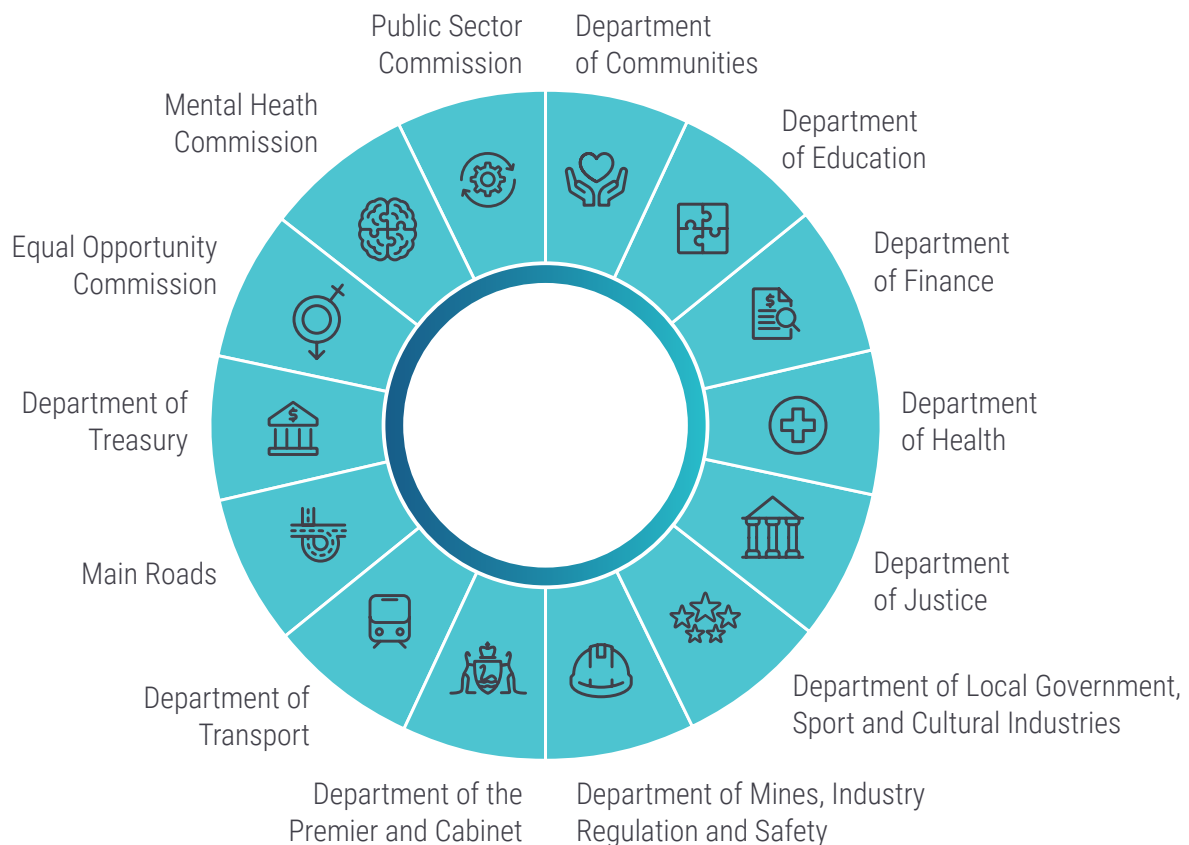
Governance – Stronger Together Implementation Group



With significant focus on gender equality, both nationally and in WA, a new governance group was established in 2022 to support the implementation of the Stronger Together 10-year strategy.

Comprising senior representatives from key government agencies, the Stronger Together Implementation Group (Implementation Group) provides a collaborative forum to address cross agency issues and advance gender equality. Members of the Implementation Group share data, information and expertise to inform implementation and evaluation of Stronger Together and the development of future action plans.

The Implementation Group includes executives from the following agencies:



Priority Areas



Health and wellbeing



Safety and justice



Economic independence



Leadership

Status



Ongoing



In progress



Completed



New



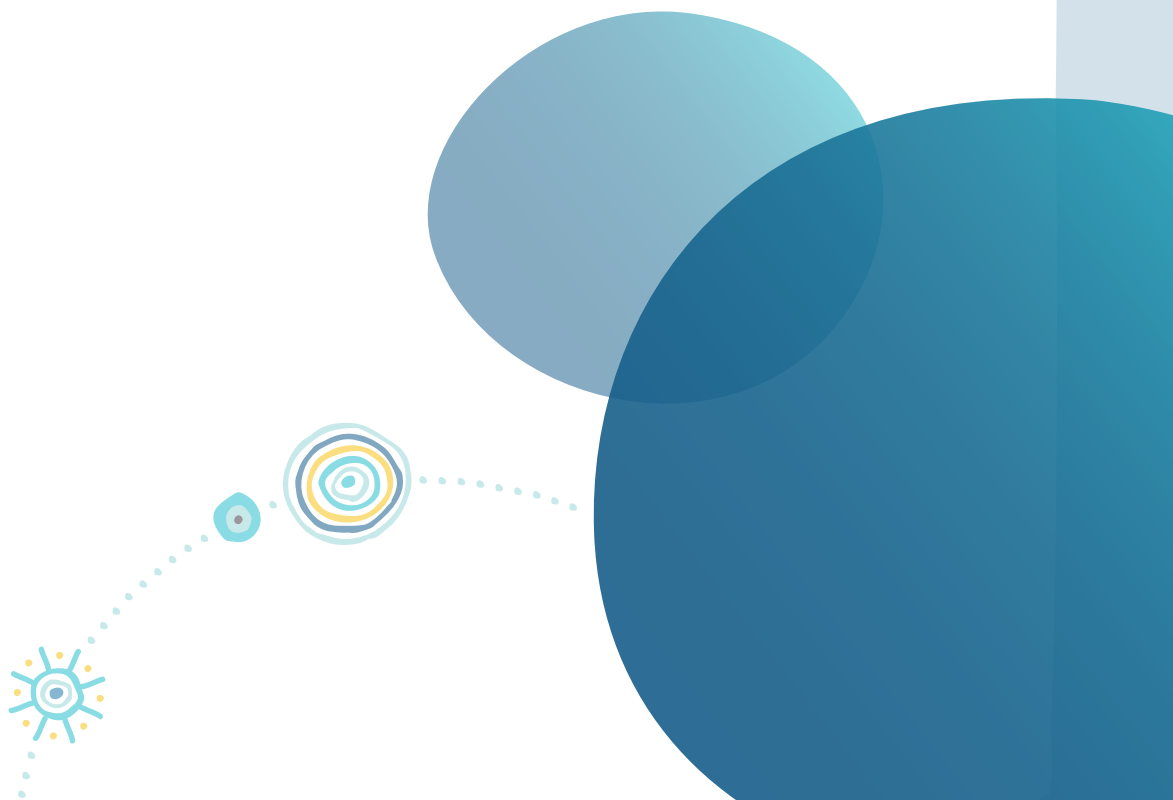
On hold

Monitoring and evaluation

Importantly, a monitoring and evaluation plan will guide assessment of Stronger Together and its four priority areas to map WA's progress towards gender equality.

Data and evidence gathered as part of monitoring and evaluation of Stronger Together will be subject to critical analysis to ensure that lessons learnt lead to informed decisions about future action plans and strategies and guide future effort for years to come.

The Women's Report Card will be used as a baseline for comparative analysis, and evaluation will be undertaken to measure and report on the overall progress of outcomes under each priority area throughout the lifespan of Stronger Together.



National work

Over the past year, there has been change to the national landscape with an increased focus on developing policy responses to improve gender equality and women's economic outcomes. This includes the release of the [National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032](#) (National Plan) in October 2022 as the overarching national policy framework that will guide actions towards ending violence against women and children over the next 10 years.

WA continues to work in close partnership with the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to examine key issues relating to gender equality and identify areas for collaboration. This includes representation from the Department of Treasury, Department of Communities and Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR) Women's Economic Opportunities Senior Officials Working Group (Working Group). The Working Group is tasked with examining and progressing key issues relating to women's economic participation and economic security.

Other key changes in 2022, include the formation of a Ministerial Council on Women and Women's Safety (Ministerial Council) and the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (Economic Equality Taskforce). The Ministerial Council will provide a further opportunity for collaboration across jurisdictions.

The Economic Equality Taskforce is an independent group of eminent women established to provide advice to support the advancement of women's economic equality and achieve gender equality. The priority objectives of the Taskforce centre on driving women's economic equality, informing the new National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality Strategy and providing advice on the Employment White Paper.



2023 and beyond

The State Government remains committed to delivering long term change to improve women's health, safety and economic outcomes through Stronger Together.

The next year of implementation will see the continued rollout of initiatives and actions under the Second Action Plan – 2021–2025. Priority work in Western Australia includes:

- the evaluation of Gender Equality in Procurement - WA Public Sector Pilot and consideration of next steps;
- participation in the second round of voluntary WGEA reporting;
- roll-out of period products in public high schools from term one, 2023;
- development of WA's first Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy;
- progress on legislative reforms to modernise abortion laws in WA;
- building on existing work to improve prevention and responses to sexual harassment in the mining and resources sector; and the
- development of a new Equal Opportunity Act.

The Stronger Together Implementation Group will continue to meet to provide guidance and direction on future actions and consider opportunities for cross-government collaboration. In 2023, planning work will commence on the Third Action Plan 2025–2029 and key actions will be monitored and evaluated, to guide future work.

Addressing women's economic outcomes is a high priority national issue with policy options under consideration across multiple forums. Opportunities to further support WA women's economic security and advance gender equality will be considered upon the release of the National Strategy and White Paper, and in line with the work of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce.





Key Milestones

2023–30

2023

- ✓ Evaluation of Gender Equality in Procurement Pilot April–June
- ✓ Gender Equality in Procurement Pilot ends 30 June
- ✓ Next steps – Gender Equality in Procurement Pilot from 1 July
- ✓ Stronger Together – Progress Report 2023
- ✓ WA participates in voluntary reporting gender equality data to WGEA
- ✓ New Equal Opportunity Bill introduced to Parliament
- ✓ Release of the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality
- ✓ Release of the Employment White Paper

2025

- ✓ Stronger Together – Third Action Plan 2025–2029
- ✓ Second Action Plan Evaluation and Report
- ✓ End of PSC’s Action Plan to improve Public Sector Outcomes for Women

2027

- ✓ Stronger Together - Progress Report 2027

2029

- ✓ Stronger Together Third Action Plan 2025–2029 evaluation and report
- ✓ Stronger Together – Fourth Action Plan 2029–2030
- ✓ Development of the new gender equality plan

2030

- ✓ Stronger Together 2020–2030 final report
- ✓ Next gender quality plan launched

Appendix

Progress on Government actions 2022

New Actions

25 new actions were identified by State Government agencies to advance gender equality in WA:

- **Free menstrual products in high schools.**
- **Abortion reform** legislation consultation.
- **Baby Makes Three** – funding provided to deliver parenting workshops and gender equality training for health and community workers. Topics include understanding the traditional notions of parenthood, gender roles and identity.
- **Drink spiking test kit rollout** at WA Police Stations.
- Commitment to embed **consent education** in WA schools' curriculum.
- Development of a **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy.**
- Relaunch of **Women's Grants for a Stronger Future** Annual Grants Round.
- Support to Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre to implement the **Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Strategic Plan 2021–26.**
- Support to Bundiyarra Aboriginal Corporation to begin consultation on the development of an **Aboriginal Women's Council** (Geraldton).
- Responding to **Enough is Enough Report** of the Inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry.
- Implementation of the **Respect@Work** recommendations.
- **Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety Program.**
- Review of the **Equal Opportunity Act 1984**
- Opening of the **Bindi Bindi Unit** within Bandyup Women's Prison providing specialised mental health assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of women in its care.
- **Transition to further education of employment program** supporting women from CALD backgrounds to develop career plans.
- **Taste of Trades** program supporting women interested in exploring careers in a trade occupation.
- **Start up Program** supporting women who are interested in small business or self employment.
- **Gender Diversity in the Trades program** assisting women and members of the LGBTIQ+ community to access Trade work placement opportunities.
- **Women in the digital age program** – supporting mature age women to develop digital literacy and skills and potentially increase enrolments in Certificate II in Applied Digital Technologies.
- New opportunities for **Women in the Wheatbelt** – a bridging program for women looking to re-enter the workforce or change careers.
- **STEM for Year 9 Students** – a program in Wheatbelt schools to have a 'taster' of the Health Care industry.

- **Scholarships for Information Technology** – Central Regional TAFE has developed 10 scholarships of \$5000 to support women to enter into training for the Certificate IV in Information Technology (Cyber Security).
- **X-Tend WA Program** – supporting the innovation ecosystem in WA through grants of \$100,000. A particular focus of the grants program was to support female founders and female investors.
- **State innovation hubs** in cyber security, data science, life sciences and creative technologies – a key focus of the innovation hubs is to increase the participation of women in hub programs.
- **Legislative amendments to cancel or refuse vehicle licence applications** that advertise sexually explicit, discriminating, or offensive material.



Health and Wellbeing

Goal: Women are healthy, active and lead fulfilled lives



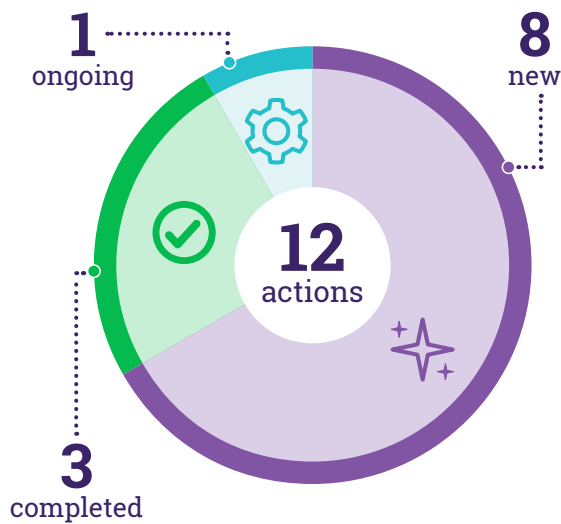
Key actions include:

- **GirlsRock!** Seven camps run to empower girls and gender-diverse young people through music education and mentorship. A Creative Conference was held in 2022 at the SAE Institute in Northbridge. Further consideration will be given to future initiatives in this area building on the success of this program.
- **State Football Centre** – Gender Neutral Changerooms and Toilets – due to be completed in 2023 in preparation for the Women's World Cup.
- **Culturally Secure Maternity Services for Aboriginal Women in WA** – First phase of project is due for completion in 2023
- **New Women and Babies Hospital** – Community consultation has commenced including design concept and service delivery models



Safety and Justice

Goal: Women live safely and have appropriate access to adequate legal protections



Key actions include:

- **Mental Health Law Centre: Care and Protection Pilot** – pilot project providing integrated care and wrap-around services to victims of family and domestic violence intersecting with the child protection system. The Pilot was completed, and due to its success, further funding was provided to June 2025.
- **Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre: Family and Domestic Violence Support Workers and the Law** – project to upskill and educate staff on legal information and tasks, including their specific role in the legal process. Project was completed in March 2022 with education being delivered to 20 women’s refuges across the State.
- **Contemporary Music Fund’s – Safer Venues Project** – project was completed in December 2022 including development and promotion of an Online Toolkit and support and training to three venues

(Mojo’s, Freeo Social and Connections) to develop individual house policies and risk management plans

- **Customer Personal Safety** – the Public Transport Authority is leading the ongoing implementation of initiatives to increase customer personal safety, including digitising CCTV footage from all train and bus stations to be monitored at a central point, increase in security personnel onboard trains after 7.00pm and a significant focus on COVID safety protection measures.



Economic Independence

Goal: Women can be financially independent across all life stages



Key actions include:

- **Job retraining scheme for women in refuges** – program delivered as part of the State COVID-19 Recovery fund which provided culturally informed workshops focussed on career counselling and pre-employment support to women who have experienced family and domestic violence.

Progress on Government actions 2022

- **TechTrails Initiative** – three year project delivered by WITWA to raise awareness of the importance of STEM skills for current and future jobs.
- Funding of **Spacecubed SheCodes** – three year project to deliver coding and technology courses to 200 women and girls aged between 13–17 years old.
- **Western Australian Group Training Program** – During 2021–22, 79 women commenced in a non-traditional trade under the program.
- **Construction Training Fund Grants** – 65 bonus grants were provided to employers in 2022 at a total value of \$44,000.
- **Aboriginal Ranger Program** – \$22.8 million has been committed across 14 projects to employ 57 FTE with more than half expected to be filled by women.

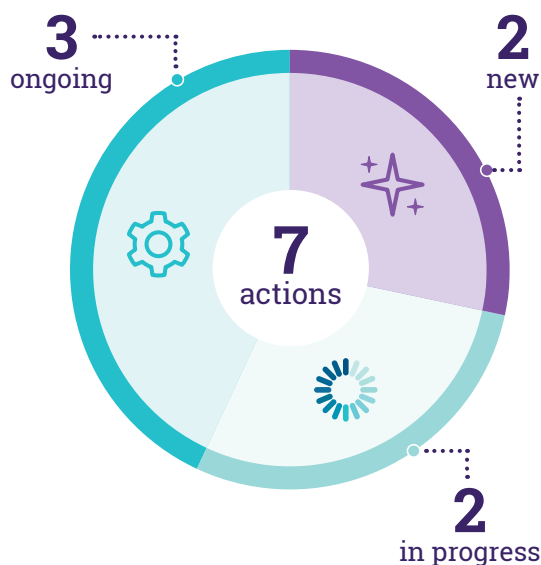
Key actions include:

- **Supporting women and girls in regional areas** – RRR Network have been provided funding to research and develop options to increase the representation of regional women on government boards and committees
- **Gender Diversity Case for Change** – By 30 June 2022, State Sporting Associations were required to meet the 50 per cent target of female representation on their boards.
- **Standing Up** – The program aims to increase the number of women nominating for Local Government councils. Following the 2021 elections, the percentage of women elected to councils increased to 40 per cent.
- **MentorNet** – provides participants with workshops and mentoring to build the capacity of women elected to Local Government across Australia.



Leadership

Goal: Women's skills, achievements and strengths are valued, enabling them to participate equally in the community, including at leadership levels



Other Actions

A further 21 actions are continuing as part of ongoing activities across government agencies. This includes annual campaigns, rolling grants programs and the continuation of programs that initiated as pilots.

Key actions include:

- **16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women** – In WA, the campaign aims to raise awareness, increase positive actions and highlight work to end violence against women.
- **Respectful Relationships** – expansion of the Respectful Relationships program in schools, mining and sporting settings.
- **Family Violence Retraining Order Conferencing** – expansion of the program into the Armadale, Broome and Bunbury Courts.
- **TAFE courses** – to enhance job-readiness and opportunities for women.



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