Gender Diversity Resources Guide

Supporting rail businesses on their diversity journey

AUSTRALASIAN RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

Improving gender diversity in the Australasian rail workforce is a key focus for the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) and its members.

The ARA has developed this Gender Diversity Resources Guide for rail organisations who are seeking support and guidance around what steps to take and what resources are available to support a gender inclusive workplace.

There is an abundance of information and resources available to support organisations identify and address gender equality gaps in their organisations. However, this can be overwhelming, in terms of knowing where to start, and the right approach for your organisation's aims and means.

The ARA has included several best practice resources that are free and available online. Many have been developed by the Australian Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

STEP 1 Self diagnose

As a first step, you need to understand your organisation's starting point. The WGEA diagnostic tool helps you to analyse the status of gender equality and pinpoint gender equality gaps within your organisation.

Begin by using the scoring process in the diagnostic tool to identify gender equality focus areas to prioritise. Use the scoring outcomes to develop your organisation's goals and objectives where you would like to make improvements.

STEP 2 Develop and implement a strategy

Develop a gender equality strategy that is relevant to your organisation. Use the scoping outcomes from the diagnostic tool to develop your organisation's goals and objectives where you would like to make improvements and develop a practical action plan.

An organisation's strategy, goals and objectives will evolve over time, so no matter where your organisation is in the process you can periodically return to the diagnostic tool to review your progress and refine your action plan.

Focus Areas

Your strategy could include a number of focus areas, depending on your organisation's objectives, including culture, recruitment and promotion, pay equity and flexible workplaces. Outlined below are several tools available that can further support and guide your organisation:

Workplace culture

Meaningful consultation will help you bring your employees along on your gender equality journey and help to ensure your organisation develops and delivers policies, strategies and initiatives that reflect employees' needs and priorities.

The WGEA guide to consulting employees on gender equality is designed to provide organisations with guidance on how to conduct employee consultation on workplace gender equality issues.

Mentoring supports career development, and mentoring tailored to develop female talent can further support women effectively move through to senior leadership.

The ARA offers an annual Women in Rail Mentoring Program to support, guide and retain women working in rail through a tailored professional and leadership development program. Participation in a mentoring program enriches the mentor as well as the mentee.

Sponsorship aims to promote the advancement of high performing individuals who would otherwise be left behind. This is true for all high performers, but it is even more critical for women. Organisations lose a lot of great talent through the attrition of women beyond mid-level roles and sponsorship is an effective mechanism for increasing female representation at a senior level.

Sponsorship goes beyond offering guidance and advice, instead sponsors act as advocates by using their leadership skills, power and influence to proactively help build and advance the careers of their sponsorees.

Inclusive leadership assists in building diverse teams that improve organisational performance. The Leadership Shadow Model applied to gender balance emphasises that as leaders, what we say; how we act; what we prioritise; and how we measure together determines what gets done.

You don't know, what you don't know, so equip yourself and your staff through various knowledge programs to assist in delivering your organisation's objectives. The ARA partners with training providers and subject matter experts to offer webinars and workshops to rail organisations. ARA members are encouraged to register for these opportunities.

It is important to keep informed and up to date with research and publications and take action in response to the Respect@Work report to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

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Recruitment and promotion

The type of language used in job advertisements can influence the type of people and gender that apply for roles. Applying a gender decoder to job advertisements assists in addressing subtle linguistic gender coding that can have a discouraging effect.

The Gender-inclusive Job Evaluation and Grading Standard is a voluntary standard developed by Standards Australia. The objective of the Standard and the Guide is to set out requirements for and provide advice about how job evaluation and grading can be carried out free of any effects of gender. The Standard includes material explaining how gender bias can affect evaluation and grading, and how those risks can be identified and minimised in each part of the job evaluation and grading process, from planning the project to reviewing the gender outcomes of the project.

Setting targets can also assist organisations reach their gender diversity goals faster. A WGEA gender target guide is available for organisations to set realistic targets. This includes a target setting calculator.

Use the WGEA gender equitable recruitment and promotion guide to ensure gender bias does not impact on your organisation's selection process for talent management and succession planning.

Gender pay equity

Analysing your own organisation's gender pay gaps is a critical step in taking action to address pay equity. WGEA has developed the gender pay gap calculator to assist employers to identify and analyse the causes of gender pay gaps within their own organisation and provides tools to rectify pay gaps. Gender pay gaps are less prevalent when pay is set by an award or collective agreement. Utilise the WGEA guide to designing an equitable remuneration policy.

Flexible workplace and caring arrangements

It is recommended that organisations undertake a flexibility readiness assessment prior to developing a workplace flexibility strategy to understand your organisation's current position. Adopting a strategic approach to flexibility ensures it is viewed as an important organisational issue. A workplace flexibility strategy defines the vision, objectives and actions for flexibility in an organisation.

Parental leave policies are designed to support and protect working parents around the time of childbirth or adoption of a child and when children are young. The availability of paid parental leave for each parent fosters a more equal division of unpaid care and paid work, improving the family work-life balance.

STEP 3   Review and measure progress

Regular monitoring, evaluation and review of your organisation's objectives, time frames and milestones will help ensure that your organisation's gender equality strategy stays on track. Evaluations also make it possible to assess why some objectives may take longer than others to flourish.

The diagnostic process will enable your organisation to establish a benchmark against which performance can be measured over time. Just as you use data to complete the diagnostic process, it is also important that you continue to collect and expand your data collection.

Data analysis is a core component of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation process. Questions to guide your review are available as part of the WGEA's gender equality strategy.

The ARA, on behalf of the rail industry, surveys its members on a bi-annual basis to provide a gender diversity report card for the Australasian rail workforce. The survey questions are based on WGEA's diversity survey. This enables the rail industry to benchmark itself against the national average and other industry sectors.

The information collected also assists the ARA and the rail industry track progress and guide the development of its gender diversity initiatives. The ARA encourages all of its members to contribute to this survey to provide a greater understanding of the gender diversity within the Australasian rail workforce, and benchmark themselves against their rail peers.

Support network

There is value in being part of a liked minded community who can provide that support network for you and enables sharing of information for new ideas and lessons learnt with real life context. There are numerous groups and organisations you can be involved, including the ARA's LinkedIn Women in Rail Network.

For more information at the ARA please contact:

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For additional resources please see:

Workplace Gender Equality Agency
www.wgea.gov.au

Diversity Council Australia
www.dca.org.au

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STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
Self-diagnose	**Develop & implement a strategy**	**Review & measure progress**
Assess gender equality in your organisation and the areas where you need to focus with <u>WGEA's Diagnostic Tool</u>	Develop a practical action plan that provides clear objectives, steps and accountability using <u>WGEA's Gender Equality Strategy Guide</u>	Monitor improvement and hold leaders accountable. Input to and benchmark against <u>ARA's Rail Diversity Report Card</u>

Focus Areas

Workplace culture

- Develop a <u>Gender Equality Strategy</u>
- Assess through workplace <u>consultation</u> & <u>surveys</u>
- Engage in mentoring via <u>ARA's Mentoring program</u> as mentee or mentor
- Implement <u>sponsorship</u> or shadowing in the workplace
- Provide <u>training</u>
- Practice <u>inclusive leadership</u>
- Take action in response to the <u>Respect@Work report</u> to <u>prevent sexual harassment in the workplace</u>

Recruitment, selection & promotion

- Review job descriptions by utilising <u>gender decoder</u>
- Implement <u>gender- inclusive job evaluation & grading</u>
- Set workforce targets with a <u>target setting guide and calculator</u>
- Refer to the <u>Recruitment and promotion guide</u> when implementing talent management and succession planning

Gender pay equity

- <u>Assess pay</u> gap
- <u>Rectify</u> pay gap
- Design an equitable <u>remuneration policy</u>

Flexible workplaces

- Undertake a <u>flexibility readiness assessment</u>
- Build a <u>workplace flexibility strategy</u>
- Utilise <u>parental leave guides</u>

Engage with a like minded community for support and information sharing such as the **ARA's LinkedIn Women in Rail Network**