



Australian Government
Inspector-General of Taxation

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF TAXATION

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN TARGETS SETTING

The Inspector-General of Taxation agency's (IGT) *Gender Equality Action Plan 2017-2019* (<https://cdn.tspace.gov.au/uploads/sites/64/2017/06/IGT-Gender-Action-Plan.pdf>), requires the setting of gender equality targets as a mandatory action under the Government's Gender Equality Strategy (the Strategy) and is a key initiative in increasing the representation of women in management positions. In applying the Government's requirement, the IGT has adopted the guidelines developed by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency¹ by setting an achievable and realistic target consistent with the Strategy.

The IGT Gender Diversity Committee has responsibility for considering the policy requirements in the relation to the IGT's action plan in setting targets and formulating recommendations for adoption by the agency. The Committee has sought to take a sensible and realisable approach to proposals for target setting toward achieving gender equality at a management level in a manner that is holistic and takes into account the nature of the organisation, and its characteristics as well as making a number of assumptions as summarised below.

ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS AND ASSUMPTIONS

General agency assumptions:

- We are a tax specialist agency. Except two executive support personnel, all staff are business/accounting/law specialists with a high level of knowledge and experience in tax administration.
- Our staffing is expected to be stable at current levels.
- Subject to government policy change including budgetary impacts, no significant changes are expected to our operating environment.

Currently, women comprise:

- 43% at the management executive level (EL1 and EL2 combined)
 - 67% at the Complaints & Review team leader level (EL1)
 - 25% at the Complaints & Review director level (EL2)
- 29% at the Complaints & Review officer level (APS5 to 6)
- 34% of our total workforce
- No SES representation – but only two roles exist

¹ *How to set gender diversity targets* – page 9

TARGET SETTING – GROUP APPROACH

Following considerable deliberation, the Committee has decided to focus on strategies that increased the proportion of women at the management level, specifically the combined EL1 and EL2 groups. Currently, there are four men and three women at the executive level in substantive positions.

The Committee's proposal is that the representation of women at the executive level may realistically be increased given that the current composition is 43% as noted above. Consistent with the Strategy, where opportunities arise, the agency will aim to reach a gender balance of 50/50 at the combined EL1 and EL2 groups.

Two approaches are proposed to promote the increased representation by women at the executive level, being:

Approach 1

Increase exposure for existing APS5&6 and EL1 women to assist them in support of their claims for executive level positions in future promotions. For example, by providing access to:

- acting executive level arrangements;
- specific leadership training courses;
- carriage of significant agency project work or role functions; and
- presenting at external panel forums.

Approach 2

Explore options where opportunities present to attract and maintain women officers, including through the approaches specified in the agency's *Gender Equality Action Plan 2017-2019*.

Considerations

The IGT is a small agency which employs business/accounting/law specialists and has enjoyed a low rate of staff turnover. Recruitment, career development and promotion is carefully managed to ensure appropriate fit for the roles that also needs to be achieved within the budgetary parameters.

As the turnover of staff has historically been relatively low, the Committee considers that the approaches to 'stretch' the skills and experience of current women officers should continue to be supported and developed. By taking a group approach to target setting at the combined EL1 and EL2 level, a realistic goal that is reasonable and achievable is proposed. The promotion of a 50/50 gender balance target for this group level also provides for improved scope for women to be further represented at the EL2 level in future development and promotion opportunities as they arise.

The Committee also considered the agency's ability to increase women at the SES level. It was appreciated that this presents several challenges. The nature of our agency structure and size is one such challenge. The SES positions require individuals with specialist taxation, scrutineering and complaint handling experience along with a broader skill set to fulfil additional roles central to the smooth operation of the agency. As such, there is a limited external pool of suitably qualified candidates available. Talent within the organisation may be an important source in future applications. In these circumstances, it may take time to develop these staff to fulfil SES positions. A further consideration is that currently only two SES roles exist, so the proportion of representation is heavily affected by the small number of available positions. Moreover, the current

cap on SES positions managed by the Australian Public Service Commission makes it difficult to broaden opportunity to increase the number of SES positions. The Committee accepted these challenges and acknowledges that target setting was difficult in this context. The agency will continue to consider the representation of women at the SES level where practical opportunities present themselves.

In light of the considerations above, the Committee recommends that both approaches be explored. By providing exposure to women APS6 and EL1 staff to acting executive level opportunities and introducing additional 'stretch' projects, officer development and promotion scope will be enhanced. This, in conjunction with the initiative to promote women's participation in leadership courses, would mean that they would be well placed to make claims against executive level positions as and when they arise in the IGT. In addition, the IGT's progress in implementing its *Gender Equality Action Plan 2017-2019* as part of the Strategy will further assist in making the IGT a more appealing workplace in supporting existing women and potential staff to make claims for executive level management positions.

APPENDIX

The following tables provide historical and current data in relation to the IGT's workforce.

Table 1: Historical data based on IGT annual reports

	Women	Men	Total number of staff	% Women	% Men
2016-17					
APS 3	1	0	1	100%	0%
APS 5	2	2	4	50%	50%
APS 6	3	9	12	25%	75%
Total APS	6	11	17	35%	65%
EL 1	2	1	3	67%	33%
EL 2	1	3	4	25%	75%
Total EL	3	4	7	43%	57%
SES 1	0	1	1	0%	100%
SES 2	0	1	1	0%	100%
Total SES	0	2	2	0%	100%
2015-16					
APS 3	1	0	1	100%	0%
APS 4	0	1	1	0%	100%
APS 5	2	5	7	29%	71%
APS 6	1	4	5	20%	80%
Total APS	4	10	14	29%	71%
EL 1	2	1	3	67%	33%
EL 2	1	3	4	25%	75%
Total EL	3	4	7	43%	57%
SES 1	0	1	1	0%	100%
SES 2	0	1	1	0%	100%
Total SES	0	2	2	0%	100%
2014-15					
APS 6	1	0	1	100%	0%
Total APS	1	0	1	100%	0%
EL 1	0	3	3	0%	100%
Total EL	0	3	3	0%	100%
SES 1	0	1	1	0%	100%
SES 2	0	1	1	0%	100%
Total SES	0	2	2	0%	100%

Note: The IGT is not included in Table 1, with the position appointed by the Governor-General by written instrument.

Table 2: General workforce characteristics as at 19 December 2017 (substantive positions only)

	Women	Men	Total	% Women	% Men
Operations & Executive Support	2	1	3	67%	33%
Complaints & Review officers	5	12	17	29%	71%
Complaints & Review team leaders	2	1	3	67%	33%
Complaints & Review directors	1	3	4	25%	75%
SES	0	2	2	0%	100%
All managers (EL)	3	4	7	43%	57%
SES	0	2	2	0%	100%
All workforce	10	19	29	34%	66%

Table 3: Career path analysis as at 19 December 2017 (substantive positions only)

	Women	Men	Total	% Women
Operations and Executive Support	2	1	3	67%
Complaints and Review officers	5	12	17	29%
Complaints & Review team management	3	4	7	43%